INSPECTION REPORT

Waltham Forest LEA

14 May 2004

ADULT LEARNING
INSPECTORATE

Grading

Inspectors use a seven-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of learning sessions. The descriptors for the seven grades are:

- *grade 1 - excellent*
- *grade 2 - very good*
- *grade 3 - good*
- *grade 4 - satisfactory*
- *grade 5 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 6 - poor*
- *grade 7 - very poor.*

Inspectors use a five-point scale to summarise their judgements about the quality of provision in occupational/curriculum areas and Jobcentre Plus programmes. The same scale is used to describe the quality of leadership and management, which includes quality assurance and equality of opportunity. The descriptors for the five grades are:

- *grade 1 - outstanding*
- *grade 2 - good*
- *grade 3 - satisfactory*
- *grade 4 - unsatisfactory*
- *grade 5 - very weak.*

The two grading scales relate to each other as follows:

SEVEN-POINT SCALE	FIVE-POINT SCALE
grade 1	grade 1
grade 2	
grade 3	grade 2
grade 4	grade 3
grade 5	grade 4
grade 6	grade 5
grade 7	

Adult Learning Inspectorate

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) was established under the provisions of the *Learning and Skills Act 2000* to bring the inspection of all aspects of adult learning and work-based learning within the remit of a single inspectorate. The ALI is responsible for inspecting a wide range of government-funded learning, including:

- work-based learning for all people over 16
- provision in further education colleges for people aged 19 and over
- **learndirect** provision
- Adult and Community Learning
- training funded by Jobcentre Plus
- education and training in prisons, at the invitation of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Inspections are carried out in accordance with the *Common Inspection Framework* by teams of full-time inspectors and part-time associate inspectors who have knowledge of, and experience in, the work which they inspect. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the inspection as a team member.

Overall judgement

Where the overall judgement is that the provision is adequate, only those aspects of the provision which are less than satisfactory will be reinspected.

Provision will normally be deemed to be inadequate where:
- more than one third of published grades for occupational/curriculum areas, **or**
- leadership and management are judged to be less than satisfactory.

This provision will be subject to a full reinspection.

The final decision as to whether the provision is inadequate rests with the Chief Inspector of Adult Learning. A statement as to whether the provision is adequate or not is included in the summary section of the inspection report.

INSPECTION REPORT

Waltham Forest LEA

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INSPECTION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROVIDER

1. The London Borough of Waltham Forest's (LBWF) Community Learning and Skills Service (CLaSS) is part of the lifelong learning directorate of the LBWF. The head of CLaSS is responsible to the executive director of life long learning through the head of community education within the local education authority. CLaSS receives funding from the London North Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for the direct delivery of adult and community learning and work-based learning across Waltham Forest.

2. CLaSS's mission is to engage local people in lifelong learning and training through widening participation and providing good learning opportunities.

3. CLaSS offers part-time and full-time programmes across the borough to support the educational, cultural, recreational, leisure and vocational interests of the community. These cover all 14 areas of learning and include accredited and non-accredited courses. The service is structured on a curriculum model. The curriculum areas are: English and mathematics; English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and languages; health and care, art and humanities; information and communications technology (ICT) and business. Curriculum managers oversee each area and are responsible for a range of subject teams.

4. The inspection covered eight areas of learning, plus family learning. The foundation programmes included, literacy and numeric, ESOL, Entry to Employment programmes (E2E) and provision for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. At the time of the inspection, there were too few learners in science and mathematics, construction, land-based provision, retailing and customer service and humanities to be included in the inspection.

5. In 2002-03, there were 16,212 enrolments. This year there have been 16,230 to date. CLaSS uses a variety of locations to deliver its courses including six main centres, four satellite centres and 79 community venues in schools, community centres, church halls and health centres. Many adult education venues are located in disadvantaged parts of the borough.

6. The LBWF has a population of 218,341 people and is located in the northeast of London. The largest employment in the area is in the service industries, with public administration being the second largest area of employment.

7. There are significant levels of deprivation in some parts of the borough. In April 2004 the unemployment rate was 4.2 per cent, compared with a national average of 2.6 per cent. Just over 35 per cent of the population are from minority ethnic groups, compared with 9.1 per cent nationally. The largest concentration of minority ethnic groups are in the south of the borough.

SCOPE OF PROVISION

Business administration, management & professional

8. There are 124 learners on business administration programmes, 113 of whom are on adult and community learning courses and 11 are on work-based learning programmes for young people. Training for adults is provided at five sites and for young people at three sites. Fourteen different adult and community learning courses were in progress during the inspection. These include courses leading to qualifications in business skills such as shorthand, typing, bookkeeping, finance and business studies. Other courses for adults prepare learners to speak in public and to set up and run a small business. Teacher training is provided for teachers and assistants to teachers of adult ESOL learners. The foundation modern apprentices in administration are recruited through Connexions or by personal recommendation. All modern apprentices attend a one-day induction at the training centre which includes an initial assessment for literacy and numeric, followed by a further induction in the workplace from the employer. These learners are placed in local businesses for their on-the-job training for four days a week and attend the training centre for one day each week for off-the-job training.

Information & communications technology

9. Two thousand three hundred and eighty-nine learners have enrolled on ICT courses with CLaSS since September 2003. Courses are offered across the borough, in a range of venues including schools, community centres and the main offices of CLaSS. Some courses are targeted at disadvantaged learners, including the long-term unemployed, lone parents, ex-offenders, disabled people and those with poor literacy and numeric skills. Of the 81 courses, 64 lead to nationally recognised qualifications. Course levels range from beginners' taster sessions including introduction to computers, e-mail and keyboarding, up to advanced word processing at level 3. There are a number of progression routes available in spreadsheets, word processing and an examination-based qualification in information technology (IT). Most of the courses are available during the day and the remainder are offered during twilight or evenings and very occasionally on a Saturday. Several courses run for a term, while a few last a full academic year. Beginners' and taster courses can be for as little as two hours.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

10. CLaSS offers courses in hospitality, sport and leisure. These include cookery for all, cake decoration, food hygiene, keep fit, yoga, pilates, tai chi, healthy lifestyles and badminton. Some courses are targeted at specific groups such as those aged over 50, women-only keep fit, men-only yoga and activities for people with learning difficulties and or disabilities. Very few courses offer external accreditation. Learners enrol on courses for health improvement, personal development, social benefits and employment. Courses are one to two hours in duration and run for between one day and 30 weeks. Provision is offered during the daytime and evenings in 14 different venues including schools, community centres and church halls. Most current learners are women and older adults. In 2002-03 there were 850 enrolments, and 79.2 per cent of learners completed their courses. Over 70 per cent of those on accredited courses achieved externally accredited qualifications in food hygiene.

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

11. CLaSS has had 550 enrolments for 2003-04. Of the learners in hairdressing, beauty and various complementary therapy programmes, 92 per cent are women and 37 per cent are from minority ethnic groups. Eighty-six per cent of learners are aged over 25. There are 12 E2E work-based learners on level 1 national vocational qualification (NVQ) programmes and 32 foundation modern apprentices. These learners did not form part of the inspection.

Health, social care & public services

12. In 2002-03, 2,705 learners enrolled on health and social care courses. Work-based learners are assessed at work or on placement, as well as attending CLaSS provision for off-the-job training on one day a week. CLaSS offers a range of courses as part of the adult and community learning programme and work-based learning in care, early years, playwork, childminding and parenting skills. The accredited courses include NVQ at level 2 and 3 in care and level 2 in early years. Tasters in childcare and an introduction to childcare and care are available. In playwork, taster days, 'take five to play' and 'everyone can play' are offered. The introduction to childminding practice course is available. The courses in counselling and self-development include the certificate in counselling skills, introduction to counselling, Islamic counselling and meditation and self-development. There are courses in deaf awareness, deaf community and culture and communication tactics. First aid courses are offered leading to the appointed persons or first aid at work qualifications. Courses are run in colour therapy and reiki therapy. Most short courses last from five weeks to 10 weeks and are taught for two to two and a half hours a week. The courses are provided at a variety of centres across the borough. Most of the learners are women, at 86.6 per cent. Just over 44 per cent are from minority ethnic groups and over 83 per cent are over 25 years of age.

Visual & performing arts & media

13. The service offers a wide range of adult and community learning courses in visual and performing arts and media. There have been 1,760 enrolments in 2003-04. The curriculum area is organised into art and fine art, creative arts and crafts, fashion, furnishing and fabrics and performing arts. Arts courses include drawing and painting, life drawing, oil painting and watercolours for beginners and more advanced learners. Creative crafts include pottery, porcelain, papercraft, glass painting. Fashion and fabrics include courses in sewing skills from beginner to level 3, patchwork, soft furnishings, quilting, stumpwork and felt making. Performing arts includes music, photography, drama, singing and various styles of dancing from salsa to flamenco. Thirty-eight per cent of courses are nationally accredited. Accredited and non-accredited courses are offered as one-year or short courses, and 68 per cent of courses run for two hours over 30 weeks. Workshops are offered as taster days or weekends plus a variety of 10-week or shorter courses during the year, including the summer. One-day or two-hour taster sessions include glass etching, machine embroidery, silk paper, cushions, bags and card making. Courses are offered during the day and in the evening. The provision operates from accommodation across the borough, mainly from adult education centres with some provision in local schools or in outreach community venues. At the time of inspection, there are 102 courses for 1,311 learners. Thirty-eight per cent of current learners are in the 35-54 age group, 24 per cent are over 65, 80 per cent are women and 31 per cent are from minority ethnic groups. The number of learners shown in art includes courses in crafts and other areas. It was not possible to disaggregate the data from curriculum areas to areas of learning.

English, languages & communications

14. The service provides 43 part-time, 60-hour, day and evening courses in nine languages offering open college accreditation. Eighty per cent of learners on these courses opt for accreditation. Forty-six short non-accredited and taster courses in an additional 11 languages are provided. Modern foreign languages courses are offered at four levels from entry level to level 3 and in nine centres across the borough, with taster and introductory courses in a variety of community venues. Seven part-time day and evening courses in British Sign Language (BSL) at levels 1 and 2 are provided at five centres across the borough with tasters and introductory courses at community venues and on employers' premises. The service offers four general certificates of secondary education (GCSE) English language courses, one advanced supplementary (AS) level English language course, one A2 level English literature course and a level 3 certificate in bilingual skills. A small programme of non-accredited courses on varieties of creative and factual writing is provided. Fifty-two per cent of enrolments are for evening courses.

Foundation programmes

15. A total of 106 literacy and numeric courses were offered between September 2003 and May 2004. Six hundred and forty-three learners enrolled on a range of courses from entry level 1 to levels 1 and 2. Two hundred and fifteen learners registered for nationally recognised qualifications. Learners can attain recognition for the achievement of their identified learning goals. Most provision is made in six adult education centres, one of which is a specially designed and constructed adult education centre. Three of the adult education centres are located in areas of high indices of social disadvantage. Three centres offer childcare provision. Some provision is made in schools and community venues, such as a converted shop. The provision is part time and is available during the day and in the evening. Additional learning support is offered at three centres and 45 learners are enrolled on this provision.

16. There are 993 learners on ESOL courses. CLaSS offers ESOL provision ranging from beginner level at entry level 1 to level 2. There are 46 courses at entry level 1, 59 at entry level 2, 22 at entry level 3, six at level 1 and two at level 2. Mixed-level workshops and literacy classes are also provided. In addition to discrete language classes, there are 15 courses which offer language learning for a particular purpose such as ESOL and IT, first aid and using the telephone. The length of these courses varies, with 55 per cent of provision run on a termly basis. The other courses consist of six annual courses and some shorter activity below 60 hours. Classes range in duration from four to 10 hours a week. Intensive courses of 20 hours a week are offered during the summer term. Achievement of learning is internally assessed. Twenty-seven venues are used to deliver ESOL classes, including 10 main sites, 12 community venues and five primary schools. One hundred and fifty-seven courses were offered during 2002-03 and 145 during 2003-04. There were 2,831 enrolments in 2003-04. The ESOL programme is managed by one full-time curriculum manager and three part-time co-ordinators.

17. The E2E programme offers courses to 45 learners in business administration, distributive operations, hairdressing, ICT and care. Recruitment of learners is generally through Connexions or referral from schools.

18. Programmes are tailored to individual needs and learners attend for 16 or more hours a week. Each learner has a designated placement officer who helps them find a work placement and carries out regular reviews of their progress. Learners attend the providers' premises for one or more days a week, where most study towards an accredited vocational qualification at level 1. All learners are taking recognised qualifications in literacy, numeric or language or key skills. All take part in activities such as team skills which are designed to encourage their personal and social development.

19. Since the start of the current year there have been 102 new learners, of whom 71 per cent are women, 78 per cent are from minority ethnic groups and 7 per cent have declared a learning difficulty or disability.

20. CLaSS provides a range of integrated and discrete provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities on foundation programmes. The service has divided the

delivery of programmes into four curriculum areas, each of which offers a range of courses in English and mathematics, health and care, ICT and humanities. The classes are available during the day and in the evening with a range of taster courses offered on Saturdays. A number of the courses run for two hours a week for 30 weeks and there are also one-day tasters, and six-week and 10-week programmes. These programmes offer accredited and non-accredited courses. The programmes include courses such as personal safety, art workshop, dressmaking, first aid, literacy, numeric and self-advocacy. The courses are offered at a variety of venues in the community including Friday Hill, Leytonstone Jubilee Centre and Lighthouse.

Family learning

21. The family learning provision is a new service developed in the past three years. In 2002-03, 750 learners were recruited to family literacy, language and numeric (FLLN) courses. Sixty-five non-accredited courses were offered across the borough, including family literacy and numeric workshops. In 2002-03, 567 learners had been recruited to wider family learning. The wider family learning programme includes family tasters, shorter courses and themed weekend fun days targeting four high deprivation wards. The main target groups are parents and other family members with children at the schools where most of the provision is based. During the past year, CLaSS has offered family learning activities in over 30 primary schools, two secondary schools and a number of learning centres owned by CLaSS. Courses are free of charge and there are often free crèches. All programmes are part time and vary in length from one session to 24 weeks. Courses are held during the school day, twilight, evening and weekends. The learning programmes are delivered in partnership with local schools, SureStart and other partners.

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

Number of inspectors	29
Number of inspection days	210
Number of learner interviews	1043
Number of staff interviews	289
Number of employer interviews	39
Number of locations/sites/learning centres visited	164
Number of partner/external agency interviews	14

OVERALL JUDGEMENT

22. The quality of the provision is adequate to meet the reasonable needs of those receiving it. More specifically, the adult and community learning in business administration, management and professional, ICT, sports and recreation, English, languages and communication and foundation programmes is satisfactory. The provision in hairdressing and beauty therapy, visual and performing arts and media, health, social care and public services, and family learning is good. The leadership and management and the approach to equality of opportunity and quality assurance are good. The quality of provision for work-based learners in health and social care is satisfactory. In business administration it is unsatisfactory.

GRADES

grade 1= outstanding, grade 2 = good, grade 3 = satisfactory, grade 4 = unsatisfactory, grade 5 = very weak

Leadership and management	2
Contributory grades:	
Equality of opportunity	2
Quality assurance	2

Business administration, management & professional	3	
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Business administration		
- Adult and community learning	113	3
- Work-based learning for young people	11	4

Information & communications technology	3	
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Using IT		
- Adult and community learning	2548	3

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	3	
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Leisure, sport and recreation		
- Adult and community learning	532	3

Hairdressing & beauty therapy	2	
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Beauty therapy		
- Adult and community learning	236	2

Health, social care & public services	2	
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas		
- Adult and community learning	2208	2
- Work-based learning for young people	98	3

Visual & performing arts & media		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Arts		
⁻ Adult and community learning	1311	2
Crafts		
⁻ Adult and community learning	0	2
Other contributory areas		
⁻ Adult and community learning	0	2

English, languages & communications		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
English		
⁻ Adult and community learning	223	3
Languages		
⁻ Adult and community learning	1301	3

Foundation programmes		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Literacy **and numeracy**		
⁻ Adult and community learning	458	3
ESOL		
⁻ Adult and community learning	993	3
Employability/employment training		
⁻ Entry to Employment	45	3
Other contributory areas		
⁻ Adult and community learning	224	3

Family learning		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
⁻ Adult and community learning	208	2

KEY FINDINGS
Achievement and standards

23. **The achievements in adult and community learning programmes, and on ICT courses are very good. The retention and achievement rates on most courses in sports and recreational programmes are good. There are outstanding pass rates in some art courses and good attainment and application of learners' technical skills in art.** Learners gain significant personal enrichment as part of these courses. **Family learning programmes help learners develop useful parenting skills,** and literacy and numeracy learners gain considerable personal skills such as confidence to speak in groups and on the telephone.

Quality of education and training

Grades awarded to learning sessions

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Total
Business administration, management & professional	1	3	8	3	0	0	0	15
Information & communications technology	0	0	11	10	1	0	0	22
Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel	0	3	6	7	0	0	0	16
Hairdressing & beauty therapy	0	0	9	2	0	0	0	11
Health, social care & public services	0	7	4	5	0	0	0	16
Visual & performing arts & media	1	11	24	12	1	0	0	49
English, languages & communications	0	6	11	11	3	0	0	31
Foundation programmes	2	12	15	25	7	1	0	62
Family learning	0	7	5	3	1	0	0	16
Total	**4**	**49**	**93**	**78**	**13**	**1**	**0**	**238**

24. **The teaching is good in many areas of learning.** Sixty-one per cent of classes observed during the inspection were graded good or better.

25. **In business administration, there are particularly good initiatives to meet local needs.** Pilot courses are run to test the demand in particular areas of the borough. The range of courses is designed to respond to actual and anticipated demand from the most disadvantaged areas. **Teaching is good on adult learning courses,** with 80 per cent of the courses graded good or better. Most learners make good progress during lessons and produce good standards of work. Learners on work-based learning programmes are placed in good work placements where roles are demanding and wide-ranging. However, the individual learning plans are poor and are not updated. They have insufficient detail of the structure of the learners' training programme. **Initial assessment for some learners is inadequate.** The planning and delivery of the foundation modern apprenticeship is weak.

26. **In ICT there is a good range of courses** and learners progress on to other courses and higher levels of training. However, there is a narrow range of teaching strategies and an over-emphasis on teacher-led instruction. The initial assessment of learners is inadequate. Learners self-assess and there is insufficient guidance on how best to complete this process.

27. **In sports and recreation programmes the monitoring of learners' progress is very effective on most courses,** with progress evaluated throughout the term as well as at the beginning and end of programmes. However, some centres have poor accommodation with rooms that have restricted space for classes. **In many sessions the initial assessment of learners' knowledge and prior experience is not completed.**

28. **In hairdressing and beauty therapy courses the teaching and learning are good.** Teachers have a good rapport with learners and create a productive learning environment. However, some accommodation is poor with insufficient resources.

29. **In health and social care programmes most teaching is good** and lessons are well planned, with clear aims and objectives. In work-based learning there is good support for literacy, numeracy and language needs. There is a wide range of courses. CLaSS is very responsive to local community needs.

30. **In visual and performing arts, teaching is planned and effective.** Tutors illustrate their teaching with references to their own professional work. There is a wide range of courses to meet demands and learners are given good advice on courses and progression opportunities. Learners who have a learning difficulty and/or disability are provided with individual learning support and integrate well into mainstream provision.

31. **In language and communication programmes, tutors make good use of a range of stimulating resources.** The service offers a very impressive range of languages with good progression opportunities. However, some teaching is unsatisfactory in language courses and tutors do not make clear what learners should be able to do by the end of their lessons. Initial assessment is weak. Learning plans identify learning outcomes for each unit, but do not identify smaller steps which help learners understand their progress.

32. **On foundation programmes, teaching and learning are good** and tutors provide well-planned and structured activities to develop skills. For learners who have a learning difficulty, learning styles and targets are taken into account when planning and delivering lessons. In ESOL programmes learners have good opportunities to extend their language skills. In E2E group sessions, tutors encourage participation and manage lessons well. However, insufficient consideration is given to individual learners' needs and goals. The initial assessment of learners is inadequate and there is no evidence of any diagnostic assessment being used.

Leadership and management

33. **CLaSS uses thorough planning and review processes in its work to meet the services' strategic objectives.** Progress towards meeting objectives is thoroughly monitored and reviewed. There are very effective partnerships which work well to expand the service. This has contributed to the increase in learner numbers and some new provision. There is good support for tutors on foundation programmes and many curriculum areas are well managed. However, **the management of work-based learning in business administration is unsatisfactory** and there is insufficient integration of literacy, numeracy and language support across curriculum areas.

34. **The promotion of equality and diversity is good.** This is demonstrated in the content of lessons, displays of work in centres, access to childcare support and general material. Equality of opportunity is good in language courses, with the programmes reaching new learners who make up 55 per cent of enrolments.

35. **Quality assurance is good with effective policies and procedures.** A very effective lesson observation scheme is linked to staff appraisal and training and a wide range of evaluation mechanisms is used for continuous improvement.

Leadership and management

Strengths

- thorough planning and review processes
- very effective partnerships
- very effective strategies to widen participation
- good practical demonstration of equality and diversity
- well-planned childcare to support learners
- particularly effective teaching observation scheme
- good arrangements for the collection and use of feedback

Weaknesses

- insufficient integration of literacy, numeracy and language support across the curriculum
- insufficient access to some centres
- insufficient arrangements to formally share good practice

Business administration, management & professional

Business administration

Strengths

- particularly good initiatives to meet local needs for adult and community learning
- good teaching
- good progress by most adult learners
- good work placements

Weaknesses

- inadequate initial assessment of some learners
- poor achievement by some learners
- poor retention and achievement rates for modern apprentices
- poor use of individual learning plans on modern apprenticeships
- inadequate management of work-based learning

Information & communications technology

Using IT

Strengths

- very good achievement
- good progression by learners on to other courses
- good range of courses

Weaknesses

- narrow range of teaching strategies
- inadequate initial assessment
- some poor retention rates

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Leisure, sport and recreation

Strengths

- good achievement and retention
- good standards of attainment on most courses
- very effective monitoring of progress on most courses

Weaknesses

- poor accommodation in some centres
- inconsistent identification of individual learning goals
- insufficient course review

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Hairdressing

Strengths

- good achievement on all courses
- very good standard of work by learners
- good teaching and learning

Weaknesses

- inadequate identification of learners' needs
- insufficient equipment in some centres
- insufficient teacher involvement in course improvement

Health, social care & public services

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good retention and achievement on adult and community learning courses
- good retention rates on work-based learning
- good teaching and learning
- wide range of courses

Weaknesses

- poor completion rates for modern apprenticeship frameworks
- slow progress for work-based NVQ learners

Visual & performing arts & media

Arts

Strengths

- good attainment and application of technical skills
- outstanding pass rates in some art classes
- significant personal enrichment for learners
- good progression
- well-planned and effective teaching
- wide and imaginative range of provision
- good curriculum management

Weaknesses

- poor punctuality in some classes
- unsatisfactory access and accommodation at some sites
- some poor health and safety practice in art

Crafts

Strengths

- good attainment and application of technical skills
- significant personal enrichment for learners
- good progression
- well-planned and effective teaching
- wide and imaginative range of provision
- good curriculum management
- good participation of under-represented groups in craft courses

Weaknesses

- poor punctuality in some classes
- unsatisfactory access and accommodation at many sites
- some poor health and safety practice in crafts

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good attainment and application of technical skills
- significant personal enrichment for learners
- challenging opportunities for performance in performing arts
- good progression
- well-planned and effective teaching
- wide and imaginative range of provision
- good curriculum management

Weaknesses

- poor retention, punctuality and attendance in some classes
- unsatisfactory access and accommodation at many sites

English, languages & communications

English

Strengths

- very impressive range of courses

Weaknesses

- weak initial assessment

Languages

Strengths

- good achievement on accredited modern foreign language courses
- good use of learning resources in modern foreign languages

Weaknesses

- some unsatisfactory teaching in modern foreign languages
- weak initial assessment

Foundation programmes

Literacy **and numeracy**

Strengths

- good attainment of personal skills
- some good teaching and learning
- good celebration of achievement
- good support for staff

Weaknesses

- insufficient consideration of specific individual needs and goals
- insufficient variety of courses
- insufficient use of ICT

ESOL

Strengths

- some good teaching and learning
- flexible and responsive provision
- good support for staff

Weaknesses

- insufficient consideration of specific individual needs and goals
- weak monitoring of progress
- inadequate advice and guidance on progression to mainstream education and employment

Employability/employment training

Strengths

- high proportion of learners on work placements
- very good individual support for learners
- effective partnership arrangements

Weaknesses

- insufficient consideration of individual needs and goals
- poor target-setting
- some poor attendance and punctuality

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- some good teaching and learning
- good celebration of achievement
- good progression
- effective partnership arrangements

Weaknesses

- insufficient consideration of specific individual needs and goals
- ineffective co-ordination of provision

Family learning

Strengths

- good development of skills
- good teaching and learning
- good assessment
- innovative and imaginative provision
- good target-setting and monitoring of provision

Weaknesses

- few opportunities to accredit learning
- insufficient language support

WHAT LEARNERS LIKE ABOUT WALTHAM FOREST LEA:

- 'we enjoy learning on the courses'
- has increased confidence and instilled discipline
- 'very good and supportive teachers'
- helped learners to improve timekeeping and become more focused
- 'making friends and having fun'
- crèche facilities
- instalments for course fees
- being able to join courses without previous qualifications
- meeting new people
- external visits to farms, museums, fire stations
- learning languages from native speakers and speaking to friends in their own languages
- being able to communicate with deaf friends
- taster courses

WHAT LEARNERS THINK WALTHAM FOREST LEA COULD IMPROVE:

- the equipment - quicker PCs and modern projection equipment
- manicure course wanted at Leyton neighbourhood
- canteen facilities at all centres
- length of courses - make them longer
- better information on foundation modern apprenticeships
- more feedback on modern apprenticeship progress
- more courses with learners at the same standard
- someone to help sort out problems with the computers
- more accurate course information requirements and assignments
- lockers for equipment and personal belongings
- more daytime courses
- more parking spaces

KEY CHALLENGES FOR WALTHAM FOREST LEA:

- further develop literacy, numeracy and language support across all areas of learning
- co-ordinate provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities across all areas of the curriculum
- plan and deliver individualised learning for learners who need it
- raise achievement rates in work-based learning

Language of the Adult and Community Learning Sector

Terminology varies across the range of education and training settings covered by the *Common Inspection Framework.* The table below indicates the terms appropriate to Adult and Community Learning

Single term used in the framework	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning	
Provider	Provider	Any organisation providing opportunities for adults to meet personal or collective goals through the experience of learning. Providers include local authorities, specialist designated institutions, voluntary and community sector organisations, regeneration partnerships and further education colleges
Learner	Learner	Includes those learning by participating in community projects, as well as those on courses. Learning, however, will be planned, with intended outcomes.
Teacher / trainer	Tutor	Person teaching adult learners or guiding or facilitating their learning.
	Mentor	Person providing individual, additional support, guidance and advice to learners to help them achieve their learning goals.
Learning goals	Main learning goals	Intended gains in skills, knowledge or understanding. Gains may be reflected in the achievement of nationally recognised qualifications. Or they may be reflected in the ability of learners to apply learning in contexts outside the learning situation, e.g. in the family, community, or workplace. Learners' main goal/s should be recorded on an individual or, in some cases, group learning plan. Plans should be revised as progress is made and new goals emerge.
	Secondary learning goals	These may include planned-for gains in self-confidence, and inter-personal skills. These should also be included in learning plans where appropriate.
Personal and learning skills	Personal and learning skills	These include being able to study independently, willingness to collaborate with others, and readiness to take up another opportunity for education or training.

Other terms used in Adult and Community Learning

	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning
Unanticipated, or unintended learning outcome	Adults often experience unanticipated gains as a result of being involved in learning. These include improved self-esteem, greater self-confidence and a growing sense of belonging to a community. Gains of this kind should be acknowledged and recorded in any record of achievement.
Subject-based programme	A programme organised around a body of knowledge, e.g. the structure and usage of the French language or ceramic glazing techniques. Students could be expected to progress from one aspect of the subject to another, to grasp increasingly complex concepts or analyses or to develop greater levels of skill or to apply skills to a new area of work.
Issue-based programme	A programme that is based on the concerns, interests and aspirations of particular groups, for example members of a Sikh Gurdwara wanting to address inter-faith relations in their town, or parents worried about the incidence of drug abuse in their locality. Issue-based learning tends to be associated with geographically defined communities, but the increasing use of electronic means of communication means that this need no longer be the case. Progress is defined in terms of the group's increasing ability to analyse its situation, to access new information and skills which will help it resolve its difficulties and generate solutions and its growing confidence in dealing with others to implement those solutions.
Outreach provision	Provision established in a community setting in addition to provision made at an organisation's main site(s). Outreach programmes may be similar to courses at the main site(s) or be designed to meet the specific requirements of that community.
Neighbourhood-based work	The provider's staff have a long-term presence in a local community with a specific remit to understand the concerns of the local residents and develop learning activities to meet local needs and interests.
Community regeneration	The process of improving the quality of life in communities by investing in their infrastructure and facilities, creating opportunities for training and employment and tackling poor health and educational under-achievement. Community regeneration requires the active participation of local residents in decision-making. Changes and improvements are often achieved either directly or indirectly as a result of the adult learning activities which arise from this.

	Relating the term to Adult and Community Learning
Community capacity building	The process of enabling local people to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to take advantage of opportunities for employment, training and further education and to become selfmanaging, sustainable communities.
Active citizenship	The process whereby people recognise the power they have to improve the quality of life for others and make a conscious effort to do so: the process whereby people recognise the power of organisations and institutions to act in the interests of the common good and exercise their influence to ensure that they do so. Adult learning contributes to active citizenship.

DETAILED INSPECTION FINDINGS

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT   Grade 2

Strengths
- thorough planning and review processes
- very effective partnerships
- very effective strategies to widen participation
- good practical demonstration of equality and diversity
- well-planned childcare to support learners
- particularly effective teaching observation scheme
- good arrangements for the collection and use of feedback

Weaknesses
- insufficient integration of literacy, numeracy and language support across the curriculum
- insufficient access to some centres
- insufficient arrangements to formally share good practice

36. CLaSS uses thorough planning and review processes in its work to meet the service's strategic objectives. This was identified in the self-assessment report. A comprehensive planning cycle is well established and the three-year strategic plan has clear links to the authority's strategy for lifelong learning. A detailed service operational plan is produced each year and is reviewed during the year. There are specific team plans for each curriculum and cross-service area of activity which are developed from the operational plan. At each level of planning there are identified targets which relate to the strategic objectives. For example, targets are set for recruitment, retention and achievement at service and curriculum levels. A well-structured schedule of meetings for senior managers and staff teams effectively supports the planning and review process. Cross-service focus groups have been established with specific tasks such as marketing. Specific strategies have been developed for priority areas such as accommodation. Progress in meeting objectives is thoroughly monitored and reviewed by senior managers in their strategic planning group. Effective actions for improvement and target-setting are taken when necessary, for example in revisions to team plans. Leadership of the service is strong and sets a clear direction for the provision, which is well managed. Staff and partner organisations in the community have a good awareness of the service's values and main objectives. There is a clear rationale for the service and it is an integral part of the authority's corporate strategy. The senior managers and elected member for lifelong learning are actively involved in the work of CLaSS. They receive regular reports on the service and review its performance.

37. Very effective partnerships have been developed by CLaSS. This was identified in

the self-assessment report and is a priority area for the service as part of the authority's community regeneration strategy. The service has a wide range of partners in the community, from the voluntary and statutory sectors and within the authority's directorates. The partnership working is particularly effective in the expansion of learning opportunities across the borough. This has contributed to an increase in learner numbers and some new provision. All the curriculum teams are involved in partnership work across the borough and two outreach workers have been appointed. Staff who work with partner organisations are skilled in the development of good working relationships and maintain particularly effective links with their partner contacts. CLaSS has set targets for the number of contacts with potential partner organisations and responds promptly and supportively to opportunities for joint working initiatives. For example, after initial contact with one school, a series of tasters and short courses were provided. A programme of more than 50 courses is planned at this school for the next academic year. Work with partner organisations makes good use of the staff's skills and expertise in developing innovative courses or adapting CLaSS courses to meet the needs of the learners.

38. Staff induction is thorough and the arrangements for staff appraisal are effective. Staff are set clear targets and their development needs are identified. For part-time tutors, the cycle of class observations is used as an opportunity to identify development needs. CLaSS has a planned professional development programme which is revised each year to meet staff training needs and to support the service's strategic objectives. It includes some accredited courses, such as teacher training. The training opportunities are generally well attended, but some tutors do not participate in the staff development programme.

39. The management of resources is satisfactory. Most courses and centres have adequate resources, but some courses are not appropriately equipped and at some centres aspects of the accommodation are unsatisfactory. Eighty-three per cent of staff have qualifications in their own subject area and 80 per cent have a teaching qualification. Financial resources are carefully monitored and effectively targeted to support the service's objectives.

40. CLaSS has satisfactory information systems. These are used to monitor performance against the data for enrolments, learner numbers, retention and achievement in the curriculum areas and across the service. However, this information is not routinely used to monitor individual courses. The information systems are used effectively by managers for planning, target-setting and to make decisions.

41. Communications are satisfactory. CLaSS publishes informative newsletters for staff and learners. There are effective communication links with part-time staff who work at the different centres in the borough. The service publishes an annual report that gives a useful summary of its activities and performance.

42. Marketing is effective and the courses are promoted with well-designed posters, leaflets and an annual prospectus, which is widely available across the borough. Additional course information booklets are produced during the year to further promote

the learning opportunities.

43. The arrangements for literacy, numeracy and language support are not sufficiently integrated across the curriculum. This was not recognised in the self-assessment report. Identification of literacy, numeracy and language needs is not consistently planned for all the programmes provided. Initial assessment is not adequate to identify learners' needs in most areas of the curriculum. Individual course tutors carry out an initial assessment for most of the courses and where appropriate, can arrange to refer learners for additional support at one of the discrete classes which are held at some of the centres. However, initial assessment is not carried out consistently and in some classes it is not used. When additional support is provided, it is not monitored or recorded. CLaSS does not have sufficient information on the extent of learners' literacy, numeracy or language support needs to plan effectively for resources and development. For example, there is no system to provide coherent support arrangements for learners who attend more than one course. Some tutors do not have sufficient skills to work effectively with learners to identify and support their literacy, numeracy and language needs. CLaSS has a strategy for additional support, but it is at an early stage of development.

Equality of opportunity   Contributory grade 2

44. The strategies for widening participation are very effective. The strategy document is well linked to the service's operational plan. Individual team plans identify clear team actions. For example, the marketing team has specific targets for outreach workers, with target numbers of disadvantaged wards to contact, employer leads and partner links to increase participation by groups which are not traditionally represented in education. There are also numerous community, voluntary and statutory organisation partnerships which are very effective. They provide an advice and referral network as well as creating new learning opportunities throughout the borough. Some courses are customised to the needs of the learners. For example, family learning is fully negotiated with schools. One employer described how literacy and numeracy provision was designed specifically for their workers and the length of course was negotiated with the employer. Promotion of equality and diversity to widen participation is good. All documents are available in different formats, such as the prospectus in taped format. Good use is made of contacts with large retail outlets which are distribution points for the literature. One new venue is located on a retail park next to a superstore. All publications show people from a range of minority ethnic groups, who are engaged in many different types of learning. These are displayed in community and public venues around the area.

45. Equality of opportunity is demonstrated well. The provider has a thorough programme of training for staff including the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The inclusive learning co-ordinator has begun attending curriculum team meetings to reinforce aspects such as differentiation in teaching to meet the needs of individual learners. Learners who have a visual impairment are well integrated in hairdressing and beauty therapy and visual and performing arts and music. Two learners in a music class had song sheets printed in Braille. Most classes include learners from minority ethnic groups. The learners value the diverse nature of classes where they learn about different cultures and religions from each other. In one literacy class, learners worked on a project

where they were encouraged to talk about the diverse cultural issues from their homeland. Good use is made of learners' cultural heritages for AS level English work. In work-based learning, learners' spiritual needs are taken fully into account.

46. The childcare support is well planned. Learners consistently state that the availability of childcare is a major issue when deciding whether they can attend courses. CLaSS plans childcare to match community needs. For example, they target disadvantaged wards in the area and then identify and use community venues where childcare facilities can be sited. Many of the learners who speak English as an additional language are women with children. Classes often represent the only external contact they have with other minority ethnic groups. CLaSS resources this support through LSC and council funding to ensure that learners are not excluded if they do not fulfil eligibility guidelines for one type of funding.

47. Equal opportunities policies and procedures are satisfactory. Waltham Forest Council has a detailed policy which conforms to all current legislation. CLaSS also produces its own policy which is tailored to the needs and goals of this part of the service. An additional policy is in draft stage and includes some strategic aims and the actions to deal with them. Learner handbooks include a statement of entitlement which explains their rights and responsibilities to CLaSS and to fellow learners.

48. Use of data is satisfactory. Data is used to monitor the take-up of the different ethnic groups, people with disabilities and gender balance. These categories are also monitored for take-up in the targeted priority wards. Targets are set for recruitment. Data is not adequately used year on year to assess the take-up of additional learning support for learners, and is not sufficiently used to plan support services.

49. Arrangements for the wider support of learners are satisfactory. When learners enrol they identify any particular health needs or disability. An interview is given and an objective assessment of individual needs by external agencies is included in the discussion. However, there is no objective assessment by CLaSS. If learners do not identify their needs at enrolment, it is left to tutors to identify problems. However, some of the tutors are not yet adequately trained to identify support needs. Some tutors are unaware that support is available and how to request it. While there is a good number of staff to support hearing impaired learners, there are fewer staff who have knowledge of wider issues. Support workers are not always fully trained to support individual learners. In one case, a visually impaired learner was given a word-processed handout which was being used by the rest of the group. The support worker read out the handout so that the learner could translate it into Braille. Handouts were not made available in an appropriate format in advance.

50. There is insufficient physical access to some centres. CLaSS actively seeks community venues to fulfil widening participation targets. While this helps access in terms of travelling, other issues including access to buildings for people with restricted mobility, have not always been fully taken into account. A significant number of sites are not fully accessible and many do not have accessible toilet facilities. Some classes are held in upstairs rooms where there is no lift. Parking is limited. CLaSS has its own venues

and a range of community and partner premises and it is aware that full access is not available at all sites. It has used the services of a specialist organisation to carry out an audit and a detailed plan of action has been formed. Many actions have been taken including Braille signage, ramps to all ground floor accommodation, good toilet facilities and railings painted in visually stimulating colours for clearer visibility, as well as safety measures for people with restricted mobility. There are plans to move from Chestnuts House to bigger, more appropriate premises.

Quality assurance   Contributory grade 2

51. The community learning and skills service has a clear quality assurance policy and a well-recorded quality assurance cycle. This is produced in an easily understood diagrammatic form supported by lists of responsibilities, reporting chains and annual target dates. The observation of teaching scheme is particularly effective. It uses only appropriately trained observers. During training, observers receive widespread moderation through co-operation with neighbouring north London boroughs. Observers are predominantly curriculum co-ordinators augmented by some experienced tutors. The written procedures and guidance are particularly clear and detail pre-observation activity, the observations and post-observation actions for the observer and the teachers. Observations are moderated at least once a year across the service, and once a term in each curriculum area. The scheme is well established and understood by teaching staff and observers. Currently, teachers are observed at least once during a two-year cycle. Observers give priority to new staff and to those who have previously received a low grade at observation. Teaching staff who receive a low grade, may request another observation. Following the observation, oral and written feedback is given to the teacher and a post-observation action plan is produced. Line managers use the observations as the annual appraisal for teaching staff. The action plan effectively serves as the personal development plan and is also used for the service's learning plan. Commonly identified development needs are met through specific staff training events. For example, observation reports revealed poor differentiation in learning sessions and the service organised training in this area. The observations are used to identify good practice, which is then effectively passed on to curriculum areas or throughout the service either through training events or through internal communications. Teachers who are graded as unsatisfactory or below are given additional support in the form of training, coaching and advice and closer monitoring by their curriculum co-ordinators. They are then observed again by a different observer. Most then achieve satisfactory or better observation grades. There is a clear policy and a set of procedures for dealing with staff who do not reach a satisfactory grade.

52. Arrangements for the collection and use of feedback are good. Learners complete end-of-course evaluation questionnaires, which provide adequate qualitative and quantitative data. Course tutors reflect on completed courses and draw on the data to produce end-of-course reports, which are then used by course teams to further improve provision. Learner feedback is also obtained from a regular programme of visits by the quality assurance manager, by co-ordinators during observation or other informal monitoring visits and through normal teacher/learner interaction. The service has recently introduced suggestion boxes and uses other innovative methods such as graffiti

walls at venues to obtain learners' views. The service sends out an annual learner satisfaction questionnaire, which has until now randomly targeted courses within the provision. Current plans are to randomly target individual learners across the provision to obtain a more representative sample at the next survey. The council also sends out a staff questionnaire to its entire workforce and provides feedback to the various services. The provider widely circulates compilations of feedback, issues arising and actions taken, through its learner and staff newsletters. In addition to senior management's commitment to quality improvement, the provider has two quality focus groups. One concentrates on an action research project to refocus on the individual learning planning process and on widening the type of evidence used for assessment. The other group has a wider remit to identify quality issues and to consider methods of improving the provision. Since its inception at the start of the current year this group has satisfactorily dealt with a number of issues including the need for further training for those involved in telephone enrolments, the need for training observers to give difficult feedback, the insufficient IT equipment in classrooms through the provision of laptop computers, and the need for a centralised teaching resource library.

53. The arrangements for internal verification are satisfactory. Verification is carried out throughout courses at planned intervals, with appropriate levels of sampling and satisfactory feedback to assessors and learners.

54. The self-assessment process is well established and staff involvement is satisfactory. The service holds meetings twice a year for curriculum co-ordinators and other senior staff to consider and revise its strengths and weaknesses. There is, however, insufficient use of course reviews. This weakness was identified in the provider's latest self-assessment report and was resolved in its associated development plan. The next report is due at the end of the current academic year and it is too early to judge the effectiveness of the planned measures. The latest self-assessment report identified many of the strengths and weaknesses identified at inspection, but some additional strengths and weaknesses were identified. Some of the strengths were no more than normal practice.

55. There are insufficient arrangements for the formal sharing of good practice in some curriculum areas. In addition to the formal observation of teaching and learning, some curriculum areas have a peer observation scheme, which is used to share good practice. Although good practice is discussed at assessor, internal verifier and internal verifier co-ordinator meetings, some of the teaching staff still have insufficient opportunity at their level to formally share good practice with their colleagues.

AREAS OF LEARNING

Business administration, management & professional

Business administration, management & professional		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Business administration		
- Adult and community learning	113	3
- Work-based learning for young people	11	4

Business administration

Strengths

- particularly good initiatives to meet local needs for adult and community learning
- good teaching
- good progress by most adult learners
- good work placements

Weaknesses

- inadequate initial assessment of some learners
- poor achievement by some learners
- poor retention and achievement rates for modern apprentices
- poor use of individual learning plans on modern apprenticeships
- inadequate management of work-based learning

Achievement and standards

56. Retention rates for adults are satisfactory. In 2002-03, two-thirds of adult learners remained until the end of their courses. Retention rates are similar on courses leading to accredited qualifications and those that are not accredited are at 65.3 per cent and 66.7 per cent respectively. The retention of adult learners on the courses that have started and finished in 2003-04 has improved. Overall retention rates so far this year are 80.7 per cent for accredited courses and 87.5 per cent for non-accredited courses.

57. The achievement by some adult learners is poor. Only 47 per cent of adults on accredited courses in 2002-03 achieved their target qualifications. These learners comprise most of the adult and community learners. There was 100 per cent achievement in the same period by adults on non-accredited courses. The achievement rate for adults on accredited courses has improved considerably to 97.5 per cent so far in 2003-04.

58. Retention and achievement rates for foundation modern apprentices are poor and

declining. In 2001-02 and 2002-03, retention was 31 per cent in each year, compared with 42 per cent in 2000-01. Achievement has shown a similar declining pattern. The proportion of learners who completed their foundation modern apprenticeship framework in 2000-01 was 23 per cent, in 2001-02 it was 15 per cent and in 2002-03 it was 12 per cent. Only 8 per cent of learners completed the framework within the planned duration in 2001-02 and 2002-03.

Quality of education and training

59. There are particularly good initiatives to meet local needs for adult learning. CLaSS is committed to increasing the number of learners from economically disadvantaged areas and strengthening its responsiveness to local employer needs. Pilot courses are run to test the demand in particular areas of the borough. The range of courses is designed to respond to actual and anticipated demand from the most disadvantaged areas. For example, a business course might be provided in a centre where it could prove more difficult to achieve the minimum number of learners than would be the case in a more prosperous part of the borough. Locations can be changed, even at short notice, if a course is under subscribed. Course timings are chosen to suit the target groups and are altered as necessary. For example, only 24 per cent of adult learners in this area of learning are men. Men generally find evening courses more convenient and business courses are scheduled outside working hours. Courses are tailored to provide what potential learners need in the workplace. For example, an accredited course in customer service has been combined with a qualification in IT to provide a useful course on one day a week. The small business course is very popular as it is offered in the evening in an area where small businesses predominate. Learners value this flexible approach to adult learning.

60. Teaching is good on adult learning courses with 80 per cent of the sessions graded good or better. Tutors plan lessons in detail while operating flexibly within their plan to ensure that they meet all learners' needs. Teaching is differentiated but does not rely heavily on training aids such as videos and overhead projectors. Whiteboards, flipcharts, good handouts and case studies which are relevant to learners' interests are used to good effect. Tutors manage groups of learners well, even when they represent a wide range of attainment in the topic of the session and literacy and numeracy. They check learners' understanding frequently. Tutors behave in a professional but friendly manner. They focus on learning goals and prepare learners well to succeed in their final exams. Tutors stay on after the end of a session to give extra support to individual learners. Classes are stimulating and often challenging. Tutors are sensitive to individuals' learning styles and capabilities. They deal promptly with difficult situations without disrupting the progress of the group. Learners express their satisfaction with their tutors as well as with their courses.

61. There is good teaching and learning in the off-the-job training. Teachers make good use of well-prepared materials and carefully select classroom activities that have relevance to learners' work experience. Learners gain skills that they can use in the workplace. In an ICT lesson, learners were producing organisational charts of their work

organisation for use in the workplace. Learners value the knowledge and skills that they gain and use them effectively in work situations.

62. Most adult learners are making good progress. Many have low levels of attainment in the subject of the course when they start and some have additional literacy, numeracy or language needs. Most learners were observed making good progress during the sessions observed. Those who are slower are supported by their tutors in a sensitive way. Tutors ensure that learners who complete exercises early are occupied usefully. Learners who join a course late in the year are made to feel welcome even by long-established learning groups. Learners report that they enjoy learning, including periods when considerable concentrated effort is required such as in shorthand and IT sessions. They also value the friendly and supportive atmosphere provided by their learning groups. Learners produce good standards of work. Most adult courses are accredited. Achievement of many of these qualifications enhances the learners' career prospects. Learners who complete a shorthand course anticipate increased salaries. Tutors make weekly checks on each learner's progress and keep detailed records. Many tutors are preparing learners for external exams. They predict pass rates and grades and this helps to instil confidence in their learners. Achievement rates for accredited courses have improved this year. Learners on work-based learning programmes are placed in good work placements where the roles are demanding and wide-ranging. Workplace supervisors are supportive and provide learners with good opportunities to collect evidence. Many learners take on additional responsibilities and progress well. Some gain full-time employment at their placement after completing the framework.

63. There are satisfactory resources for adult learners. Tutors are appropriately qualified and experienced. Classrooms are adequately equipped, although some are not well ventilated. There are some very modern and well-equipped classrooms. Industry standard computers and software are provided when necessary and seating at work stations is satisfactory. Resources for work-based learners are satisfactory. Staff are qualified assessors and experienced trainers. Most have worked in positions of responsibility in industry and make good use of their knowledge and experience. Teaching accommodation for the off-the-job training is adequate. Learners are provided with up-to-date textbooks to help them with their NVQ studies.

64. Assessment practice for work-based learners is satisfactory. Learners take an initial assessment in literacy and numeracy during the induction and the results are used to determine whether additional support is necessary. Initial assessment of ICT skills relies on learners' self-assessment and is unreliable. Assessment in the workplace takes place regularly, but there is insufficient variation in assessment methods with an over-reliance on observation.

65. There is currently no advanced modern apprenticeship programme with the provider. Some of the foundation modern apprentices have sufficient entry qualifications for an advanced modern apprenticeship and are being insufficiently challenged.

66. Adult learners are supported well, except for those whose support needs are not identified until after the start of their courses. Clear advice is given on the courses and

programmes and on opportunities for learners to progress onto other courses. However, learners on some courses feel that they have not been made sufficiently aware of the high volume of work needed outside the class. Some of these learners feel that the level of learning is higher than is required for their jobs. However, the work required of them is in line with the qualifications for which they are registered.

67. Support for work-based learners is satisfactory. Learners who need additional support with literacy or numeracy are able to attend a number of drop-in sessions at the centre. However, there is insufficient monitoring of learners' attendance. Learners have flexible access to assessors during their off-the-job training, and teachers provide good individual support during lessons.

68. There is poor use of individual learning plans on modern apprenticeships. They are not updated regularly and have insufficient detail on the structure of the learners' training programme and the planned timescale for completion. Learners do not have a copy of their individual learning plans and are unaware of its importance to their training programme. There is little overview of the learners' progress and their awareness is confined to the short-term action-planning process.

69. Initial assessment of some learners is inadequate. The formal assessment process is used to record learners' own views of their levels of attainment against the listed course objectives. Although space is provided to describe the learners' additional needs, this is not always recorded. In practice, tutors make their own assessment of barriers to learning that they are able to identify. Although additional support is available, tutors generally carry out this task themselves. They provide support and guidance to individuals and in some cases this places an additional burden on tutors and reduces their direct contact time with other learners. Learners sometimes help each other, but this is not always possible. Tutors do not always know which learners use English as an additional language. All tutors are committed to the principle of open access to their courses and they work sensitively to help learners overcome barriers to learning that are identified. Many staff provide informal support and guidance to learners without accurate knowledge of their skills. However, much of this informal support is not recorded. There is no effective system of initial assessment.

Leadership and management

70. The planning of the delivery of the foundation modern apprenticeship framework is weak. Insufficient attention is given to the timing and co-ordination of all parts of the framework, particularly the technical certificate and enhancement requirements. Learners have little awareness of the components of the framework beyond the NVQ. They are not clear about what they have achieved and what remains outstanding. Effective records of learners' progress are not routinely maintained, and formal team meetings are insufficiently frequent. Little progress has been made with the introduction of unit accreditation, even though this was identified in the provider's development plan.

71. Quality assurance is used to good effect in maintaining and improving teaching standards. Regular observations of tutors are used effectively to provide critical feedback

that leads to personal development. The self-assessment report identified some, but not all, of the strengths and weaknesses identified during inspection.

72. All staff are committed to providing equality of opportunity for all learners. Local minority ethnic groups are represented widely on most courses, but less than a quarter are men.

Information & communications technology

Information & communications technology		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Using IT - Adult and community learning	2548	3

Using IT

Strengths

- very good achievement
- good progression by learners on to other courses
- good range of courses

Weaknesses

- narrow range of teaching strategies
- inadequate initial assessment
- some poor retention rates

Achievement and standards

73. The achievement rates are very good. At the time of inspection, 96 per cent of learners who completed courses had achieved their primary goal. Achievement is very good on accredited and non-accredited courses. The overall achievement rate for learners during 2002-03 was 94 per cent. Overall retention rates were satisfactory. However, 25 per cent of learners who enrolled on courses during 2003-04, left early and did not complete their courses, compared with 21 per cent during 2002-03. Retention has been particularly poor on some courses during 2003-04. For example, retention was less than 45 per cent and as low as 18 per cent on 13 courses.

74. Learners progress well onto other courses. At the time of inspection, 51 per cent of learners have progressed onto other CLaSS courses since September 2003. Some learners progress to higher-level courses while others choose to learn additional computer programmes at the same or lower levels. There is evidence of progression by learners from non-accredited courses to accredited courses.

Quality of education and training

75. There is a good range of courses. At the time of inspection there are 81 courses, of which 64 lead to nationally recognised qualifications. Courses are offered in a variety of venues across the borough and include schools, community centres and a purpose-built centre. The flexibility in timing of courses allows learners to attend courses during the

day or evening, for short intensive periods or for longer periods. Learners also have access to a variety of courses ranging from entry level to level 3. The range of provision includes beginners' taster sessions such as introduction to computers, e-mail and internet, keyboarding, spreadsheets, desktop publishing, web page design, advanced word processing at level 3 and an examination-based qualification. Most courses are available during the day and the remainder are offered during the twilight or evening and very occasionally on a Saturday. Some courses are targeted at specific groups such as Asian and African-Caribbean women with disabilities. Provision is also targeted to meet local employer needs and includes council staff who have limited or no computer skills.

76. The resources are satisfactory. Most of the centres used for ICT courses are satisfactory. There is access for learners with restricted mobility at all but one of the centres being used. Computers are up to date with one computer for every learner. Software is mainly up to date and meets industry standards. Rooms are generally bright and well decorated with blinds at the windows, and at most of the centres appropriate seating is provided. In at least two centres, the rooms do not have natural light or air. In some classrooms, work stations are cramped with little or no working space. In other classrooms, computers use floor space under the desk and there is little room for learners to place their legs. Teachers are generally well qualified and have a good command of their subject. When handouts are provided they are mainly very good.

77. The support for learners is satisfactory. Alternative equipment, such as keyboards with enlarged characters for learners with learning difficulties or disabilities, is available at some centres. There is also access in some centres to hearing loops and larger monitors. The guidance onto other provision is satisfactory, although the self-assessment report identified that learners would like better information before the start of the courses.

78. The range of teaching strategies is narrow and insufficient. There is an over-emphasis on teacher-led instruction. Some teachers use lengthy step-by-step detailed instructions as a teaching strategy. For example, during word-processing classes, teachers instruct learners on simple tasks such as how to embolden, underline or italicise text. In one session, learners were taught formatting and page movements without text to practise on. In several sessions the pace is often slow and unchallenging. Learners who are at a more advanced level have to wait for other learners to catch up before moving onto the next set of instructions. Some sessions are planned in detail with each topic ticked off as it is covered. In some cases there is an over-emphasis on recapping what learners have already covered in previous sessions and even previous courses at lower levels. Of the sessions observed, 50 per cent were good, compared with 69 per cent as stated in the self-assessment report. However, the information in the self-assessment report combined ICT with business administration.

79. Health and safety practices are not fully established. Examples from more than one-third of the sessions observed include learners not sitting correctly at their workstations and not adjusting chairs and monitors for their height and comfort. They were not reminded of good health and safety practices when using computers. However, in better sessions tutors outlined basic health and safety rules at the start of the session and in other centres, health and safety notices for computer use are displayed clearly on walls or

near the monitors. Occasionally, unused monitors are left on, creating glare and sometimes distraction from moving images displayed on the desktop.

80. The initial assessment of learners is inadequate. Methods are inconsistent. For example, the form used for learners to self-assess their ability and prior skills is adapted by teachers to suit the course, but different scales for grading ability are being used. In one observed session, many learners indicated on their initial assessment form that they had prior knowledge and experience of a particular topic. However, during the session, they indicated otherwise when asked questions by the tutor. Terminology being used for self-assessment is confusing and in some cases learners have identified a high level of ability in a task, yet claim no knowledge of computers or of that particular package. Some learners are being asked to complete the initial assessment form without guidance before joining the course, while others are being completed during their first session. In some cases some of the forms are not returned by the second or third week of the course. On a particularly course some learners had completed the initial assessment for every module of the course at the beginning, whereas others completed them at the start of each module. The initial assessment is not used to plan teaching strategies. There is evidence that tutors supplement the formal initial assessment with an informal process, the results of which are not recorded. A review of the initial assessment process has been identified in the self-assessment plan.

81. Progress is reviewed regularly by tutors. However, the recording of progress is often insufficient, with tick boxes being used to indicate completion of an exercise or meeting of assessment criteria. There is little evaluative information about learners' progress recorded.

Leadership and management

82. There is a clear line management structure for management of the area. Curriculum co-ordinators have a good understanding of their role and their contribution to meeting the strategic objectives of CLaSS. Curriculum co-ordinators are responsible for the line management of a group of teachers, but also have other management responsibilities which include recruitment, quality assurance, project management, development of commercial courses and technical support. The recruitment process for tutors is thorough and involves an ICT test, an interview and a presentation. Staff who are involved in the recruitment of tutors have all been trained on recruitment and selection procedures. The ICT team is contributing to meeting the strategic objectives of CLaSS, particularly in relation to widening participation. For example, at least 25 per cent of learners enrolled on ICT courses are from minority ethnic groups and 18 per cent are over 65 years of age.

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel

Hospitality, sport, leisure & travel		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Leisure, sport and recreation		
- Adult and community learning	532	3

Leisure, sport and recreation

Strengths

- good achievement and retention
- good standards of attainment on most courses
- very effective monitoring of progress on most courses

Weaknesses

- poor accommodation in some centres
- inconsistent identification of individual learning goals
- insufficient course review

Achievement and standards

83. Achievement and retention rates are good and have remained stable throughout 2002-03 and 2003-04. In 2002-03, achievement was 97 per cent and retention 79 per cent. Learners achieve a good standard of work and those with little or no previous experience make good progress. Learners improve their knowledge, skills and abilities at appropriate levels. Many learners develop significant improvements in their mental and physical well-being. For example, learners in yoga and tai chi have benefited from improved concentration and stress relief, which has made an impact on their lives. In cookery, learners have gained skills and confidence to prepare meals for friends and family. Learners gain benefits from attending fitness-related classes in terms of the maintenance of health, preventing deterioration and improvement in fitness. Well-being is recognised as being very important, particularly by elderly learners.

84. The attendance at sessions is satisfactory. In the sessions observed during inspection, 78 per cent of learners attended. In some sessions learners attend well in advance of the session start time to prepare for the class. In one yoga class learners arrived early to begin relaxation techniques, and in a cookery class, to organise ingredients.

Quality of education and training

85. The monitoring of progress is very effective on most courses. Most classes use formal mechanisms for recording and monitoring progress. In some cases tutors have adapted the generic monitoring forms so that they are relevant to individual subject areas. Learners are involved in the evaluation of their progress on a formal and informal basis and many learners are able to recognise improvements in their own progress. In some cases progress and achievements are reviewed by tutors and learners throughout the term as well as at the start and end of the course.

86. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Learners benefit from well-structured and well-planned sessions. Many tutors have devised their own handouts to provide information on specific subjects to reinforce the learning. Tutors are enthusiastic, supportive and aware of individual learner needs. Activities are adapted to suit learners' physical constraints. There is good management of learning within mixed-ability groups. Learners benefit from a variety of teaching methods such as demonstrations, verbal explanation, individual and paired working, as well as group discussions, quizzes and readings. Tutors pay good attention to the checking and correcting of positioning and posture during exercises. Sessions are relaxed and informal and this creates an effective learning environment.

87. Satisfactory resources are used in teaching sessions. In most sessions all necessary equipment is provided and is of a good standard. When resources are not provided by the service, tutors bring sufficient for learners to participate in a range of activities. In cookery sessions, tutors provide ingredients for learners where only very small quantities are required to avoid learners having to purchase costly ingredients.

88. Learners receive satisfactory advice and guidance. Taster sessions, open days, introductory courses and a telephone information line are provided for prospective learners. Course information sheets have been produced detailing course aims, outcomes, practical requirements and any necessary resources, as well as course times and duration. Initial health-screening questionnaires are used to good effect so that tutors are aware of individual needs and can operate safely in their sessions.

89. Some of the centres offer poor accommodation. In many cases the accommodation causes problems with health and safety, such as raised nails in the gymnasium floor, and dirty and dusty rooms in yoga, tai chi, keep fit and cake decoration. Rooms are often cluttered with tables, chairs, screens and raised platforms that reduce the amount of space available and present an uninspiring learning environment.

90. The identification of individual learning goals is inconsistent. In many sessions initial assessment of learners' knowledge and previous experience is not carried out. Standard forms are often incomplete and are not generated for all learners. When learner goals are identified, these are not used in the development of individual learning plans or for the planning of sessions. Few individual targets are set at the beginning of the course.

Leadership and management

91. Curriculum management is satisfactory. Curriculum and team development plans are prepared to meet the service's priorities and objectives. Plans reflect areas of improvement within individual programme areas. Plans and targets are reviewed every six months and actions are followed up through meetings with curriculum programme co-ordinators. Session observations are carried out as part of the services' quality assurance mechanisms to improve provision. Personal development plans for tutors are developed and actions for improvements are identified from the observations. There is a good working relationship between the programme co-ordinator and tutors. However, tutors are not involved in the development of the curriculum. The views of learners and tutors are not always obtained. There is insufficient awareness among tutors of the strategic objectives of the service and their role in the self-assessment process. There are few opportunities for tutors to share good practice within specialist subject areas. The review of course provision is insufficient. The service offers a narrow range of courses with few progression opportunities. Although the range of provision is in line with the service objectives, there is no signposting of progression opportunities for learners outside of the service. Partnerships with other providers in the borough are informal with few joint working arrangements.

Hairdressing & beauty therapy

Hairdressing & beauty therapy		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Beauty therapy - Adult and community learning	236	2

Hairdressing

Strengths

- good achievement on all courses
- very good standard of work by learners
- good teaching and learning

Weaknesses

- inadequate identification of learners' needs
- insufficient equipment in some centres
- insufficient teacher involvement in course improvement

Achievement and standards

92. Overall, achievement rates are very good. Achievement for all hairdressing and beauty therapy programmes is 98 per cent and retention is satisfactory at 68 per cent. The cosmetic make-up course had 100 per cent achievement in 2002-03. Learners' practical and written work is very good. In particular, learners' portfolios in nail art are well constructed and contain good photographic evidence. There are creative samples of work displayed on artificial plastic nails. In one manicure lesson learners had only been on the course for three weeks but showed good skills when completing a French manicure.

Quality of education and training

93. Teaching and learning are good. In the better sessions teachers use good demonstrations and questioning techniques and learners take an active part in the learning process. Teachers have a good rapport with learners, which helps develop a productive learning environment where learners feel supported. In one session learners worked in pairs and had to locate bones, muscles and joints on each other. This enabled learners to work together on a practical basis. In other sessions there is a good mix of practical work and theory used to reinforce learners' understanding. There is particularly good teaching in nail art and learners at introductory and certificate level progress quickly and produce a high level of creative work. Aspects of health and safety are sufficiently reinforced.

94. The assessment and internal verification processes are satisfactory and meet the awarding body standards. Forward planning of internal verification takes place, but systems are basic. Target-setting is satisfactory. Learners are given short-term assessment targets and most are clear about them.

95. CLaSS provides a satisfactory range of courses to meet local community needs. Learners can progress from pre-entry level to level 3. CLaSS offers courses in the community to widen participation, such as henna skin decoration to attract Asian women. Of the learners observed, all enjoyed their classes and most intended to progress, or had progressed, to a higher level. Classes are planned to offer flexibility in attendance. CLaSS runs a number of activities to promote lifelong learning in the community. These include a beauty show, vitality show, pamper days, open days and a health and craft fair where learners are encouraged to participate. Learners are informed of, and encouraged to attend, field study trips. The highlight of the year is the well-publicised, celebration of achievement at the local assembly hall, where learners collect awards under a number of categories.

96. Guidance and support are satisfactory. Learners benefit from crèches in daytime centres. Learners on accredited courses can take advantage of study support classes. Learners also receive good support from their tutors. Additional support is provided through effective individual coaching, particularly with learners who have physical learning needs. For example, for one blind learner, the tutor was able to support learning by putting her hands over the learner's hands to demonstrate massage techniques. Audiotapes and Braille material were also used. Support with literacy, numeracy and language needs is satisfactory. Learners are referred after enrolment if a need is identified. Most activities are practical and do not require writing skills. Learners are aware of how to ask for support if they need it. However, teachers do not have details of individual learners' needs. For example, some learners have language difficulties and others have preferred learning styles that are not identified or catered for in lesson planning or during teaching. These learners progress slowly.

97. Some accommodation is poor. One centre is new and others are soon to be replaced. There are insufficient resources in some centres. For example, in one centre there are no trolleys for learners to place massage oils and equipment. Learners place oils and equipment on the floor or have to bring their own small tables with them in order to work effectively. In another centre there are only two magnifying lamps working. On some courses learners are required to word process their work and there is insufficient access to computers. Rooms in some centres are untidy and some are not well decorated.

Leadership and management

98. Staff are enthusiastic and have a strong sense of purpose. The mix of teaching staff is good with 30 per cent of teaching staff from minority ethnic groups. Learners have a good learning experience. However, there is insufficient teacher involvement in course improvement. The self-assessment report was general to the health and care curriculum

area and there was very little reference to hairdressing and beauty therapy. There is little opportunity for staff to share good practice. CLaSS has identified this and has recently invited part-time teaching staff to meetings, but some do not attend and this has not yet had an impact. Although teaching observations take place, there is insufficient peer shadowing of teachers who deliver specialist subjects to share ideas and establish a standard approach. Course reviews are not sufficiently evaluative to establish areas of strength or weakness.

Health, social care & public services

Health, social care & public services		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Other contributory areas		
⁻ Adult and community learning	2208	2
⁻ Work-based learning for young people	98	3

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good retention and achievement on adult and community learning courses
- good retention rates on work-based learning
- good teaching and learning
- wide range of courses

Weaknesses

- poor completion rates for modern apprenticeship frameworks
- slow progress for work-based NVQ learners

Achievement and standards

99. Retention and achievement are good on adult and community learning programmes, and on work-based learning programmes the retention rates are good. Overall rates for adult and community learning are 80.31 per cent retention for 2002-03 and 85.8 per cent for the same period on accredited courses. Achievement for adult and community learning courses was 99.2 per cent for 2002-03 and achievement for accredited courses was 98.8 per cent for the same period.

100. Some level 2 learners on E2E have progressed from level 1 onto NVQ at level 2. They have learnt to word process their written work for the NVQ and it is neat and well presented. All learners gain confidence and level 3 learners develop good presentation skills, which gives them greater confidence when attending childcare case conferences. Many learners develop good time management skills and very good understanding of child development and parenting skills. Some adult learners on childcare programmes describe using the public library to research subjects for the very first time.

101. The completion rates for modern apprenticeship frameworks are poor and NVQ learners on work-based learning programmes make slow progress. For work-based learners only 5 per cent have completed the foundation modern apprenticeship framework in early years care and education since 2000. Of the learners on foundation modern apprenticeships in care, 50 per cent have completed the framework since 2002.

Many learners are still on programmes.

Quality of education and training

102. Most teaching is good or better. Lessons are well planned with clear aims and objectives. Teachers have good working relationships with learners and pay attention to problems which are highlighted in the lessons. The schemes of work are carefully written to meet the requirements of the qualifications. Portfolio-building lessons are included in schemes of work and portfolios are neat and well presented and include a range of assessment methods. However, lesson plans do not identify ways of meeting the differing needs of learners in groups. For example, the specific literacy, numeracy or language needs of learners. Materials are not amended or developed to allow for the preferred learning styles of individuals.

103. There is an adequate range of resources. Venues are warm and welcoming, but some of the accommodation is oppressively warm. Staff are suitably qualified. Learners have access to IT but are expected to buy their own textbook.

104. In work-based learning there is good support for language needs and literacy and numeracy support. However, assessment of literacy and numeracy is not routinely carried out for adult and community learning accredited courses. Teachers carry out informal observation of learners' language and literacy skills and inform them of the support available, but few learners take up the offer.

105. The internal verification system has identified that there is an over-reliance on learners completing written work as evidence for the NVQ. For adult and community learning counselling courses, learners complete weekly learning diaries and receive additional support when necessary. Learners on NVQ programmes are requested to write assignments on frequently occurring activities, which could be assessed through observation of practice. These learners are also asked to complete reflective accounts for every observed assessment. Learners monitor their own progress and keep their own records. Assessment plans are thorough and appropriate to the learners' situation and needs.

106. There is a wide range of courses available. CLaSS is very responsive to local community needs. ESOL, literacy and numeracy support is given alongside main programmes. The local labour market requires staff to be qualified to level 2 to meet local regulations and employers are encouraged to enrol staff. Subject tutors interview learners before enrolment and advise them of a suitable programme. Learners are offered a range of bite-size and taster courses. Level 1 childcare courses are available and accredited. Induction varies and is limited for adult and community learning courses. It is mostly thorough and detailed for work-based learners. These learners receive a handbook to reinforce the induction information.

107. The advice and guidance for learners is satisfactory. A booklet is distributed to households and the local press lists all programmes at venues across the borough. Pre-

course advice is available. The initial interview is thorough and ensures learners are placed on suitable programmes. For example, potential level 3 learners are asked to identify how they will provide evidence for each unit of the NVQ. If they cannot meet the requirements they are advised to enrol on level 2. There is a range of bite-size, tasters and level 1 courses with good progression routes to level 2 and 3. Learners have access to childcare support, funded through the LSC or the local authority.

Leadership and management

108. Most of the tutors produce appropriate lesson plans and schemes of work. They record tutorials. The lesson observation scheme is linked to appraisal and staff development and staff are clear about the opportunities for training and the organisation's expectations. Equality of opportunity is promoted well. There is good pictorial evidence of the service's commitment to equality of opportunity and good promotional material. Work-based learners can recall the equal opportunities information and understand it. Learners are able to give appropriate definitions of equality of opportunity and understand their own and others' rights and responsibilities. Quality assurance is appropriate and internal verification procedures are well established and sound. External verification report action plans are satisfactorily actioned and there are no outstanding problems.

Visual & performing arts & media

Visual & performing arts & media		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Arts		
- Adult and community learning	1311	2
Crafts		
- Adult and community learning	0	2
Other contributory areas		
- Adult and community learning	0	2

Arts

Strengths

- good attainment and application of technical skills
- outstanding pass rates in some art classes
- significant personal enrichment for learners
- good progression
- well-planned and effective teaching
- wide and imaginative range of provision
- good curriculum management

Weaknesses

- poor punctuality in some classes
- unsatisfactory access and accommodation at some sites
- some poor health and safety practice in art

Crafts

Strengths

- good attainment and application of technical skills
- significant personal enrichment for learners
- good progression
- well-planned and effective teaching
- wide and imaginative range of provision
- good curriculum management
- good participation of under-represented groups in craft courses

Weaknesses

- poor punctuality in some classes
- unsatisfactory access and accommodation at many sites
- some poor health and safety practice in crafts

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- good attainment and application of technical skills
- significant personal enrichment for learners
- challenging opportunities for performance in performing arts
- good progression
- well-planned and effective teaching
- wide and imaginative range of provision
- good curriculum management

Weaknesses

- poor retention, punctuality and attendance in some classes
- unsatisfactory access and accommodation at many sites

Achievement and standards

109. The standard of learners' work is good. Many learners achieve beyond their expectations and progress from non-accredited to accredited courses. Some learners progress to prestigious higher education institutions. In 2002-03, there were 743 learners and 99 per cent achieved their learning goals. The retention rate for 2002-03 is 74 per cent. In 2003-04 achievement overall is 95 per cent for all courses completed. There is a high pass rate in art at advanced level. In most art lessons the emphasis placed upon drawing and sensitive use of colour is reflected in particularly lively work. For example, in a painting and drawing class learners experiment with fast, expressive brushstrokes and wax resist. Most of the learners benefit from an extended learning experience, with tutors arranging additional workshops, exhibitions and activity days. For example, in

china and porcelain classes learners are encouraged to join a one-day china painting workshop, and patchwork and quilting learners attend a textile workshop day. Portfolios show good observational drawing, strong awareness of composition, and learners have a well-developed contextual awareness. In crafts and textiles, work is consistently good. Learners develop good technical skills and knowledge and work is well finished. Design skills are basic and are not always valued by learners or linked sufficiently to practical work. In several classes punctuality is poor. In some performing arts classes retention is poor. Learners gain good personal and social benefits and, in particular, recognise the increase in their self-confidence following retirement, bereavement or illness.

Quality of education and training

110. Teaching is well planned and effective. Practical demonstrations reflect the knowledge and expertise of tutors who are sensitive to the different needs of learners. An appropriate level of technical language is used in all classes and tutor expectations are high. For example, in an embroidery taster session learners were introduced to stumpwork. The fast pace of the well-prepared and intensive lesson ensured learners were challenged and gained expertise and knowledge. In an accredited fashion session the explanations of the more technical aspects of garment making were made very clear by the tutor as he demonstrated the insertion of invisible zips. Music, dance and performing arts learners respond positively to the demands of public performance. Learners' success is celebrated through fashion shows and exhibitions.

111. Many tutors are practising artists, performers and craftspeople and bring their knowledge and experience to the classroom. Tutors illustrate their teaching with references to their own professional work and bring in finished pieces and samples to inspire learners. Most of the tutors are qualified teachers. The professional development programme includes teacher training and the opportunity to gain other professional skills. All tutors who teach accredited programmes have trained at an appropriate level and this has given more learners the confidence to progress to accredited programmes.

112. Four of the six main learning centres have specialist facilities for art, craft, media or performance activities. Most classrooms and studios have good natural light and are well equipped and well maintained. However, insufficient attention is given to aspects of health and safety in art and craft studios. The ceramics studio is poorly decorated, the floor is not sealed and learners were sanding biscuit fired ware with poor control of silica dust levels. There is no sink in some craft rooms. In guitar classes learners do not have stands and have to put their sheet music on the floor. There is limited access to IT and internet facilities for most learners. The arts and crafts provision is moving to new premises in December 2004.

113. Assessment is effective and thorough on accredited courses. Forms of assessment are appropriate for the courses being followed. Assessment on the accredited programme is co-ordinated well and internal verification is thorough and understood by tutors and learners. There is good use of laptop computers by tutors to record assessed work and critical review. However, there is inconsistent practice on non-accredited

programmes. Individual learning plans are not always used to identify wider learning needs. Assessment practice is not consistent and there is no formal identification or sharing of the good practice taking place in individual cases.

114. Imaginative curriculum development provides a wide range of courses to meet learner demand. Courses are provided at convenient times and venues and are packaged in different ways to enable learners to attend. For example, the same course can be taken over a period of weeks or in a block of two weeks. The service is aware of poorly represented groups. To widen participation, successful targeting of African-Caribbean learners, male learners and residents living in the south of the borough has increased the number of people from under-represented groups. Craft and textile courses have been developed at the African-Caribbean and Sikh centres, and a successful taster class led to a large salsa dancing group.

115. Learners are given good advice on the courses available and progression opportunities. Many learners have progressed from non-accredited programmes to accredited ones as they have been developed. Although individual learning plans are not always used effectively on all courses, individual support for learners is good. Tutors are sensitive to the learners' need to build enough confidence to return to education, and friendly and supportive teaching styles are characteristic. In an Asian dressmaking session the tutor was able to speak Urdu, Punjabi and English and learners were making traditional garments.

116. A number of learners who have learning difficulties are provided with additional support in classrooms and successfully integrate into mainstream classes. Tutors are not always aware of withdrawal procedures and some names remain on registers when learners have not attended for long periods.

Leadership and management

117. Senior managers set clear strategic direction. Curriculum managers and co-ordinators are confident that they will be supported in their ideas for improvement and development. There is a clear ethos of continual improvement. Quality assurance is effective and performance is monitored through observations of teaching and learning and appraisal of managers. However, self-assessment procedures are not thorough or detailed. Members of the community are encouraged to progress to teaching at the centre. For example, there are trainee teacher placements as classroom assistants, before and during training. Equality of opportunity is promoted effectively. Tutors from minority ethnic groups are actively encouraged to challenge negative stereotyping. For example, a young African-Caribbean man teaches dressmaking to Asian women. Learners in an accredited basic sewing class were supported by a tutor of ESOL throughout the course. The ESOL tutor simplified some handouts and the course programme to help the learners understand.

English, languages & communications

English, languages & communications		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
English		
- Adult and community learning	223	3
Languages		
- Adult and community learning	1301	3

English

Strengths

- very impressive range of courses

Weaknesses

- weak initial assessment

Languages

Strengths

- good achievement on accredited modern foreign language courses
- good use of learning resources in modern foreign languages

Weaknesses

- some unsatisfactory teaching in modern foreign languages
- weak initial assessment

Achievement and standards

118. Achievement on accredited modern foreign languages courses is good. Ninety four per cent of modern foreign languages learners achieved accreditation in 2002-03. All learners completing AS level Urdu achieved grades A to C, most at grade A. However, retention and achievement on level 1 BSL courses were unsatisfactory. Only 63 per cent of learners were retained and only 69 per cent of these achieved a pass in 2002-03. Achievement in English was good overall in 2002-03. Retention on modern language and English courses is satisfactory, at 73 per cent and 69 per cent respectively. In the best modern foreign languages lessons, learners communicate with commendable fluency and accuracy. In level 3 sessions they are able to discuss aspects of culture, such as Spanish festivals, for sustained periods. They can ask and answer complex questions. In many level 1 modern foreign languages classes, learners develop accurate pronunciation and intonation and gain the confidence to engage in free conversation. In an A level English literature class, learners had a good understanding of genre. In a

creative writing group, learners showed good appreciation of the construction of a text. They used correct technical terms to justify their opinions about the meaning and quality of the work under discussion. In an AS level English language lesson, learners made particularly interesting observations about dialect featured in text. They produced writing of a high standard, using their diverse linguistic, ethnic and cultural histories as subject matter. Attainment in BSL lessons is satisfactory. Learners read signs confidently and some sign stories well. Many learners make good personal gains. For example, many adults who are new to education profit from modern foreign languages and BSL taster courses before moving successfully on to longer courses in the same subjects. One BSL learner found that her relationship with her deaf brother was transformed after learning signing skills. Some modern foreign languages learners have started to write poetry of a high standard, collaborating in a project with learners in the countries whose language they are studying. However, in the less than satisfactory modern foreign languages lessons, learners' fluency is impaired by the influence of English on their pronunciation and sentence construction.

Quality of education and training

119. Tutors make very good use of a range of stimulating resources in modern foreign languages. These sustain learners' motivation and provide an interesting variety of contexts in which they can speak and hear languages. For example, a classic French film was shown with subtitles in French to compensate for the deterioration in its soundtrack. In Italian and Spanish classes, tutors use attractive picture cards to teach new vocabulary and cue sheets to stimulate pair work. Lecturers use good audio tapes to ensure that learners hear a variety of authentic voices and accents. Learners greatly enjoy a weekly drop-in ICT session. However, in a minority of classes, tutors rely too heavily on paper-based resources. All modern foreign languages staff are native speakers or fluent in the language they teach and are good linguistic role models. The small minority of unqualified staff in BSL are well supported by other staff who help with course structure and lesson planning.

120. The service offers a very impressive range of languages, with good progression opportunities from entry level to level 3. Accredited courses include French, Spanish, Italian, German, Mandarin, Greek, Russian, Arabic and Urdu. Tasters and short courses comprise less frequently available languages such as Catalan, Czech, Hebrew, Hungarian, Latin, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Swedish, Turkish and Yiddish. The service provides courses in a good range of venues to attract new learners. Tutors successfully promote progression opportunities from literacy programmes to pre-GCSE courses and beyond. Many learners benefit from BSL courses starting at various times during the year. Courses are very effectively marketed to reach new learners. The prospectus contains helpful generic descriptions of language levels. Attractive posters and leaflets advertise the particularly wide variety of taster courses. The service offers BSL courses on employers' premises. Tutors give useful specialist advice by telephone or in person. Learners receive invaluable support from the daytime crèches for pre-school children at all main sites. Daytime level 2 BSL courses are now running for the first time after a crèche was organised. The learner support fund subsidised 50 per cent of BSL learners in

one part of the borough in 2003-04. The fund has also paid for GCSE English language support groups and for dyslexia support for BSL learners. Learners benefit from a wide variety of extra-curricular activities. Tutors greatly extend learners' experience with cultural visits, for example to France, to a centre for Spanish studies, to plays, films and events for deaf people.

121. Some teaching in modern foreign languages is unsatisfactory. In unsatisfactory lessons, tutors introduce excessive numbers of new words or speak too much English. Learners become confused, rely too much on translation and make little progress. Some of the tutors do not make clear to learners what they should be able to do by the end of the lesson. A scheme of work template used in all subjects is superficial. It makes no reference to the development of learning skills or to different learners' needs. Lesson planning is of a higher standard but focuses on tasks rather than outcomes for the learners. Even in satisfactory lessons, a few tutors spend too much time talking and do not help learners to become actively involved. However, much teaching is good or very good. In the best lessons, tutors skilfully deal with the planning deficiencies in the service's standard forms.

122. Initial assessment is weak. For instance, in modern foreign languages it does not always measure learners' ability to listen, speak, read and write. Some learners and tutors do not understand the numerical scale used to describe learners' skills at the start and end of courses. The document is frequently not completed properly. Individual learning plans are unsatisfactory. They identify learning outcomes for each unit but do not list essential smaller steps which help learners understand their progress. Learners on many English courses have no individual learning plans. Learners who do not seek accreditation receive no final record of what they have achieved. Individual termly progress reviews do not generally take place. Initial assessment is satisfactory in the certificate in bilingual learning and some English courses. Learners' achievement of units of accreditation and coursework marks are carefully recorded across the area of learning. Most BSL tutors keep satisfactory records of learners' improving skills.

Leadership and management

123. One curriculum manager is responsible for courses in modern foreign languages and BSL and another for English. Both have additional curricular responsibilities. Three co-ordinators give valuable additional support to the leadership and management of modern foreign languages and BSL and these arrangements work well. Curriculum co-ordinators have a broad overview of the provision. They have a clear understanding of many of its strengths and weaknesses, some of which are mentioned in the self-assessment report. They keep tutors well informed about the good opportunities for training and news of developments in the service. They are effective advocates for their subjects. Tutors understand and value the role of managers and staff morale is high. Learners benefit from this, for instance when tutors freely give their time to the considerable number of very effective extra-curricular activities.

124. Equality of opportunity is good. The programmes are successful in reaching new learners, who make up 55 per cent of enrolments. Learners from minority ethnic groups

are well represented on most courses and particularly well on BSL and accredited English courses. A higher than usual proportion of learners are men. Many learners are able to take part in courses as there are crèche facilities and a learning support fund. However, there are very few people with declared disabilities on the programme. The ethnicity profile of staff in modern foreign languages and English does not match that of learners.

125. Quality assurance is satisfactory overall. Co-ordinators identify actions needed to improve the provision and ensure their implementation. For example, standardised assessment materials and internal moderation meetings for accredited language courses have been introduced to improve the consistency of assessment. Mock examinations are now held for all BSL courses to improve poor pass rates. The programme of lesson observations works well. Reports of observations frequently evaluate important aspects of teaching, such as the use of foreign languages or ICT in class. There are good links between training needs identified in reports, the provision of training opportunities and the measurable impact on learners. However, some reports are insufficiently judgemental. Managers make insufficient use of data to monitor retention and achievement on individual courses. They are unable to use the schemes of work written by many tutors to help them evaluate what is happening on courses. The self-assessment report does not identify the need to further develop initial assessment or schemes of work.

Foundation programmes

Foundation programmes		3
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
Literacy **and numeracy** - Adult and community learning	458	3
ESOL - Adult and community learning	993	3
Employability/employment training - Entry to Employment	45	3
Other contributory areas - Adult and community learning	224	3

Literacy **and numeracy**

Strengths

- good attainment of personal skills
- some good teaching and learning
- good celebration of achievement
- good support for staff

Weaknesses

- insufficient consideration of specific individual needs and goals
- insufficient variety of courses
- insufficient use of ICT

ESOL

Strengths

- some good teaching and learning
- flexible and responsive provision
- good support for staff

Weaknesses

- insufficient consideration of specific individual needs and goals
- weak monitoring of progress
- inadequate advice and guidance on progression to mainstream education and employment

Employability/employment training

Strengths

- high proportion of learners on work placements
- very good individual support for learners
- effective partnership arrangements

Weaknesses

- insufficient consideration of individual needs and goals
- poor target-setting
- some poor attendance and punctuality

Other contributory areas

Strengths

- some good teaching and learning
- good celebration of achievement
- good progression
- effective partnership arrangements

Weaknesses

- insufficient consideration of specific individual needs and goals
- ineffective co-ordination of provision

Achievement and standards

126. In literacy and numeracy courses, learners develop good personal and communication skills. They are able to help their children with mathematics at school, write to relatives abroad and confidently use the telephone. The standard of learners' work is satisfactory in most lessons and in many lessons it is good or better. Learners talk confidently about the progress they are making in developing skills in self-evaluation. Speaking and listening skills are demonstrated in class. For example, learners can identify features of a good discussion and then demonstrate their ability to listen, ask questions to check understanding. Learners' on pre-GCSE courses are able to demonstrate analytical skills in reading texts and describe their thinking processes in solving mathematics problems. However, some learners make slow progress in developing basic literacy skills; for example, a few have been at beginner level for three or four years. Others make slow progress in areas such as spelling.

127. Retention rates for literacy and numeracy courses are satisfactory. In 2002-03 the rate was 72.4 per cent for numeracy and 74.2 per cent for literacy. Many learners progress through the levels and onto other courses within the curriculum area. Retention for ESOL provision is satisfactory at 73 per cent for 2002-03 and 79 per cent for 2003-04. Achievement rates are 93.1 per cent for 2002-03 and 93.5 per cent for 2003-04.

The retention rate for learners with learning difficulties/disabilities in 2002-03 was satisfactory at 88.8 per cent. The achievement rate was good at 95.2 per cent.

128. Retention on the E2E programme is satisfactory, with 65 per cent of the current year's learners still attending or having gained employment, an apprenticeship or entered full-time education. Those with successful outcomes represent 35 per cent of all leavers. Most learners improve their literacy, numeracy and IT skills during their programme. They gain confidence in their written and oral communications, their use of basic mathematics and in the use of ICT. Learners are encouraged to assess their own improvement by comparing their present skills with those when they started their programme. In their vocational studies, learners develop skills and knowledge to help them make the best of their work placements and to enable them to make informed decisions about their own career options. However, attendance and punctuality in some classes are poor. Learners are often late at the beginning of the day and after break.

Quality of education and training

129. Teaching and learning are good in most foundation programmes, and this was identified in the self-assessment report. In the best lessons tutors provide well-planned and well-structured activities to develop skills. They challenge learners to extend their skills and encourage them to reflect on their learning. They provide a variety of well-structured activities which build on prior learning and use group and pair work effectively. They make and use a range of appropriate resources to deal with different learning styles. In one lesson the tutor used several different ways to help learners understand equivalences in fractions including a fraction wall and different coloured circles cut into pieces. In an outstanding lesson on speaking and listening, learners drew pictures which contained eight objects, then described these to a partner, using language which identified size, position and relationship between objects. The other learner drew a picture based on the description, asking questions to check what they understood. They then compared their drawings and discussed why there were differences. All the learners were able to talk about what they had learnt and how learning the words in context and associated with the pictures would help them remember them. However, in weaker lessons, learning activities are not sufficiently well planned.

130. For learners with learning difficulties, learning styles and learning targets are taken into account when planning and delivering lessons. The interest of learners is maintained using effective teaching methods to encourage participation. Additional support staff are used effectively. Learners are also encouraged to review each other's work to identify what has been achieved. In an art lesson learners were able to discuss and review the light, tone and techniques used to create their artwork.

131. In ESOL programmes learners have good opportunities to extend their language skills. Relevant topics reflect the needs of the learners and the context in which they need to communicate outside the classroom. These classes have a good variety of learning activities consisting of individual, pair and whole-group activity.

132. In E2E, group sessions are well managed and encourage learner participation but do not differentiate between learners' preferred learning styles. In the literacy, numeracy and language and key skills sessions, learners follow individual learning plans, receive effective tutor support and are encouraged to use a variety of paper- and computer-based learning materials.

133. For learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, there are good progression routes. For example, the learners can progress to courses within the same curriculum area, different subject areas, higher-level courses or external courses offered by another agency.

134. A high proportion of learners on the E2E programme have a work placement. Seventy-eight per cent of those presently in learning spend, typically, two days each week with an employer. Placements range from small businesses to multinational organisations. Placements complement learners' vocational aims. Learners develop new vocational skills and improve their interpersonal and social skills through contact with customers and other employees. Some learners progress into permanent employment with their work-placement provider.

135. The service responds well to the needs of ESOL learners. It offers a wide range of venues across the borough. There is crèche provision attached to all but three venues, and a good range of daytime and evening classes. Recently, Saturday classes have been introduced.

136. E2E learners receive very good individual support. Placement officers have a good understanding of their learners' individual needs, both pastoral and in relation to their programme. Particularly good working relationships are developed between staff and learners. Staff act quickly to resolve problems, provide sound advice or refer learners to other agencies for specialist help. In classes, learners are treated with respect and are encouraged to support each other. In the workplace, employers provide support and encourage learners to develop a work ethic.

137. There is positive celebration of learners' achievements in literacy, numeracy and in the provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. In classrooms at the main centres, there are posters showing the names of learners who achieved certification last year. This not only celebrates their success, but helps motivate other learners. Additionally, there is a good display of learners' work at two of the main centres. There is an annual celebration evening and learners' achievements are regularly highlighted in the newsletter. In the provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, learners are nominated by the teaching staff for awards. In 2002-03, seven learners received awards for 'achieving against all the odds', outstandingly consistent hard work and contributions to classes.

138. Resources across foundation programmes are satisfactory. In some sessions, relevant practical and industry standard resources are used effectively, for example the use of modern packing materials to support a business administration class. However, there is some poor teaching accommodation. Some training rooms are poorly decorated

and are not visually stimulating. The learners in most lessons use paper-based activities and for many learners this form of communication is inappropriate. Access to many rooms is inadequate for those with restricted mobility.

139. In literacy and numeracy classes, assessment and monitoring are satisfactory. Initial assessment is used to identify the appropriate level for learners, but there is little use of diagnostic assessment to identify specific difficulties or needs. Learners' difficulties or support needs are not always identified, nor are the reasons for slow progress discussed with learners. Tools for initial assessment are suitable for their purpose, but outcomes are not always reflected in individual learning plans. Their usefulness as a mechanism for assessing and recording achievement is limited. Good oral feedback is given to learners after an assessment, but there is little evidence of effective written feedback.

140. On E2E programmes, assessment and internal verification are satisfactory. Learners' work is carefully marked but there is sometimes insufficient feedback to provide learners with clear guidance on how to improve. Insufficient emphasis is placed on completing NVQ units on the E2E programme.

141. Programmes and courses are sufficient to meet the needs of most learners. All E2E learners are offered qualifications that lead to recognised certification.

142. Short-term target-setting on E2E programmes is poor, particularly during progress reviews. Targets are not sufficiently detailed or challenging and do not motivate learners. They are poorly recorded and are rarely shared with work placement providers. Reviews are frequently carried out at the training centre, but employers do not routinely participate and are not given a copy of the review paperwork. Reviews focus mainly on pastoral care. Vocational aspects of the review are often poorly completed, as there is insufficient information on progression routes.

143. Insufficient consideration is given to individual needs and goals of learners across all foundation programmes. The initial assessment does not meet the diverse needs of learners and there is no evidence of any diagnostic assessment being used. The outcome from initial assessment is not used effectively to identify the ability of the learners and their learning targets. In some of the classes observed, learners were inappropriately placed and were unable to be effectively involved in classroom activities. In the weaker literacy lessons there is no clear link from the individual learning plans to the lesson plan. Tutors often plan their lessons around common identified targets related to the core curricula and national qualifications rather than individual needs. They do not have effective strategies for developing skills in contexts which are relevant to individuals' work or interests. For example, in literacy classes learners work on common spellings and spelling patterns, but do not have sufficient opportunity to learn spellings that they need or will use. There is insufficient individual support in the classroom. For example, one learner needed help with literacy to help her progress in numeracy, but this was not available. There is good information for tutors about dyslexia and there is some staff training, but tutors are not always confident enough to identify learners who show indications of dyslexia. There is a limited amount of assessment and support available for dyslexia.

144. In ESOL the individual needs of learners are not consistently met. There is limited differentiation in some lessons. Weaker learners are unable to cope with language tasks while learners with stronger language skills appear bored once they have completed their task. Learners are given insufficient time to respond to questions, and have insufficient opportunity to express their thoughts. Learners are unable to reflect on their own learning.

145. On the E2E programme the Passport is poorly used and completed by staff. Some parts of the Passport are completed when a learner starts the programme but it is rarely amended or updated. There is insufficient emphasis on the planning of individual routes through the programme. For example, learning styles are identified, but the information is not used to make the most of learning opportunities. Many learners have a poor understanding of the structure of their programme and of the progress they are making with their NVQ. Some learners do not carry their Passports with them or update them as required. Employers do not have a copy of the Passport and find it difficult to plan the co-ordination of on- and off-the-job training. The three strands of the E2E programme are insufficiently integrated. Formal communication between staff who deliver the different strands of the programme is poor. For example, learners who have language needs are being asked to read a textbook during a vocational class. The completion and use of the Passport is not included in the quality assurance arrangements.

146. The monitoring of learners' progress in ESOL provision is weak. New systems for screening and summative assessment were introduced in the autumn of 2003, but they do not form a coherent cycle of monitoring language and learning needs on arrival and on exit from the course. There is a placement test which is administered centrally during enrolment, but the outcomes are not used to inform the tutors of the learners' skills and needs. This applies in particular to speaking and listening skills which are very rarely recorded. The tutors carry out an initial assessment, but its delivery is inconsistent. Most tutors make insufficient use of the outcomes of the placement test and their own initial assessment when planning learning. Individual learning plans are often completed by the learner and there is little evidence of tutor input. There is currently no external accreditation of language skills. A new set of assessment tasks has been introduced, but this is incomplete in that it does not cover listening skills. The recording of the outcomes of the summative assessments is minimal, particularly in relation to the achievement of speaking and listening.

147. ICT is not used sufficiently to develop learners' literacy and numeracy skills. In many classrooms there is no computer and in others, only one. In some cases, rooms are too small to use the computer comfortably. Laptop computers are available, but these are not well used. Rooms which have computers are not used for literacy and numeracy classes, except for designated courses. Some specific programmes and software are used for courses such as preparing for the driving theory test using CD-ROMs. However, there is little flexible use of computers to develop and reinforce skills in other courses. Software, such as voice recognition technology, to support independent learning for learners with reading and writing difficulties, is not used as an alternative approach.

148. The variety of literacy and numeracy courses is insufficient to meet the needs of the community. Literacy and numeracy programmes range from pre-entry to level 2, but the programme does not provide a wide range of interesting and innovative courses to meet community needs. Slow progress is being made in planning to incorporate literacy, numeracy and language skills into leisure, special interest and vocational courses. Programmes are not located in a range of community-based venues such as community halls, libraries and informal venues on housing estates to promote flexibility and accessibility.

149. In ESOL there is inadequate advice and guidance on progression routes to mainstream education and employment. Tutors are aware that learners transfer to mainstream provision with CLaSS and other partners, but there is no strategic approach to monitor this. Course publicity does not include clear signposting to mainstream education and preparation for employment. Tutors see progression to the next level of language courses as a priority rather than their transfer into mainstream education. Guidance on English language provision is good. All learners have access to an entry and exit interview during which their needs are discussed and suitable provision is identified. Guidance and support is satisfactory in literacy and numeracy courses and in the provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Childcare is offered to learners through a crèche or childminding. Learners are given advice and guidance informally by tutors who know what is available within the service, but they are not fully conversant with wider support agencies.

Leadership and management

150. There is strong management support for staff teaching on literacy, numeracy and ESOL courses. Staff training needs are identified through the internal observation scheme which is used for appraisal. Managers quickly set up appropriate training for individual development as well as general training. Staff are fully supported in their training. For example, one tutor is being loaned a laptop computer while she attends an ICT course. The curriculum manager and three co-ordinators provide good support for the ESOL tutors. There is a mentoring system for new staff and good opportunities and mechanisms for sharing good practice, resources and ideas. A numeracy/maths group and a pre-GCSE group meet regularly for this purpose. Time is designated to share ideas and resources on staff development days. Tutors have good access to managers and find them supportive and responsive to requests for resources and suggestions for improving provision. One tutor who has dyslexia and dyspraxia was given a disk with all the necessary forms and paperwork on it so that she could complete them on the computer. One main centre has a good range of learning resources and publications on methodology for ESOL tutors.

151. For learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, there are effective partnership arrangements with day care centres, health, social services, schools and voluntary groups. The partners often provide the venue for the courses. For many learners the first point of contact is through one of the partners. A referral process has been developed and learners are often introduced to a course and encouraged to attend.

152. The leadership and management of foundation programmes are generally satisfactory. Staff know who their line managers are and co-ordinators regularly plan and attend meetings, which have agendas and minutes. There is good planning to increase the level of teacher qualifications. The internal observation scheme is effective. However, managers do not use data thoroughly to evaluate and plan provision. For example, they do not systematically collect progression data. Course reviews are not used sufficiently for planning.

153. Leadership and management of ESOL provision are satisfactory. There is good support for tutors. However, the progress is insufficiently monitored. Communication is satisfactory. Staff receive newsletters, e-mails and telephone calls to keep them up to date with curriculum issues.

154. Leadership and management of the E2E provision are satisfactory. Partnerships are used well to improve the E2E provision. CLaSS is an active member of the north London partnership for the promotion and improvement of E2E provision. A website has been established to provide information on the geographical and occupational availability of E2E provision. CLaSS shares experiences and good practice with other E2E providers and is part of a working group looking at improved use of the E2E Passport. Staff have developed good communication with Connexions and with employers. These communications benefit the learners by providing good access to the E2E programme and the opportunity to attend a work placement.

155. The provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is not well co-ordinated. There is no consistency of approach to curriculum planning and development. The data is difficult to interpret in order to get an accurate picture of retention and achievement for individual courses. The initial assessments and individual learning plans vary across the curriculum areas. Some learners do not receive adequate or appropriate support. The adequacy of resources varies from course to course. The learners are not effectively monitored to ensure they have a good learning experience. There is insufficient opportunity to formally share good practice across or within curriculum areas. Some learners enrol on more than one course and have an individual learning plan for each course with a number of targets. The targets are usually different even if the subject of the course is the same. For example, one learner is enrolled on a number of literacy courses and has several individual learning plans. The staff who teach on these courses have not communicated or discussed the learners' individual learning and personal targets.

Family learning

Family learning		2
Contributory areas:	Number of learners	Contributory grade
- Adult and community learning	208	2

Strengths

- good development of skills
- good teaching and learning
- good assessment
- innovative and imaginative provision
- good target-setting and monitoring of provision

Weaknesses

- few opportunities to accredit learning
- insufficient language support

Achievement and standards

156. The development of skills is good. Family learning activities are well designed to support parents/carers to help their children with learning. Parents/carers now have a better understanding of their children's needs and how to support their schoolwork, play games at home, develop parenting strategies, and learn how to support difficult children. Learners also gain insights into how children learn, along with the requirements of the national curriculum. They understand how to promote learning in everyday activities and how to make learning fun during a range of taster and longer courses. For example, several learners said that they now understand how activities such as preparing food or playing games and messy play provide opportunities for learning with their children. Parents gain unexpected benefits, such as increased self-confidence and self-esteem. There is evidence that parents' own literacy and numeracy skills have increased. Schools benefit as parents learn about school and feel more comfortable in that environment. Barriers between different communities break down while they develop understanding of different cultures through Bollywood dance courses, belly dancing, henna hand painting courses and European language classes. Parents and children develop creative skills through a range of practical art and craft activities such as hat and felt making and they learn relaxing and calming techniques.

157. There are few opportunities to accredit learning. There are a few substantial courses running in parenting and FLLN such as a family literacy course of 72 hours, but the decision has been made with a range of partners not to accredit these. This was, however, identified as an area for development in 2003. There are plans for the new academic year to provide accredited modules on a parenting course and some shorter

family courses.

Quality of education and training

158. Teaching and learning are good. Seventy-five per cent of observed sessions were graded good or better. Sessions are detailed and well planned. Schemes of work and lesson plans include learning objectives and a range of stimulating activities for parents and children. Most sessions are well attended. On FLLN and parenting courses, family learning tutors and school teachers ensure the learning needs of parents and children are recognised. Tutors on parenting courses make good use of learners' prior knowledge and experience. Constant reference is made to how activities from the learning sessions can be applied to the learners' home life. Learners are enthusiastic and well motivated. There is very effective interaction between the learners and tutors, who use a good range of appropriate teaching techniques and learning activities. Tutors use a wide range of everyday, inexpensive resources, such as fruit, seeds, scarves, hoops and balls. These were used to stimulate learning and to develop movement and rhythm in a family literacy activity. Family learning tutors are sensitive to the learning needs of under-represented groups in their communities. Feedback from learners is regularly sought in innovative ways, including graffiti walls, oral recordings, interviews and end-of-course questionnaires.

159. The assessment practice is good. Learners are regularly assessed in FLLN and parenting classes and informally assessed in the wider family learning. Learners are encouraged to reflect on their own and their child's learning. Individual learning plans are clear and achievable and learners are set realistic group and individual goals. An initial self-assessment on FLLN courses helps to develop each learner's individual learning plan. The course and session aims are clear and progress is assessed against these objectives. Learners are encouraged to identify what skills they would like to develop during the course. Learning outcomes are closely monitored and tutors give encouraging group feedback and keep good records of each individual learner or for the group. In most sessions, tutors finish the session by asking learners to reflect on what they have learnt. On some courses learning diaries and homework help learners to recognise and record their own progress. The course planning is often modified and responds to the identified needs of the group. The tutors use individual learning plans to identify literacy, numeracy and language needs. Tutors often promote attendance at skills for life and language courses. Other additional needs are identified through enrolment and discussion with learners. A learner who is profoundly deaf is supported by a signer, and there is always a signer available at fun days.

160. The family learning provision is innovative and imaginative and is designed to be a first step into learning for family members. There are over 50 choices of tasters and short courses, including tai chi for families, dads and baby massage, Spanish with IT and animated pictures. The range of courses meets the variety of needs and interests of new adult learners at times and venues which are convenient to them. CLaSS has actively targeted older family members, dads, and a wide range of minority ethnic groups including Turkish, African-Caribbean and Asian learners and has successfully recruited.

Tutors are responsive to the needs of all family members and plan many of the activities for parents and children to work together. Parents appreciate the time this gives them to be with their children in the school or learning environment. The work has been developed in partnership with a wide range of organisations including the pre-school learning alliance, steps-to-health and SureStart to target areas of deprivation. Good communication between partners enables the family learning team to communicate effectively with specific groups of isolated or otherwise socially excluded learners. The partners jointly monitor provision across the borough and identify gaps in the existing provision. Programmes enable learners to gain positive experiences of education. On the family fun day, themed 'body-works' attracted 60 families, including parents and grandparents. The adults joined their children in a wide range of learning activities which included bubble bath making, yoga, healthy food and hygiene, marbling, fitness and exercise, collage, first aid, sewing pillowcases, backpacks and the science of how the digestion works. For some parents this is their first experience of learning since leaving formal education.

161. Resources are satisfactory. Staff are appropriately qualified and staff development is considered important to the success of the programmes. There is a good support system for tutors and the opportunity to share good practice, particularly at fun days. The co-ordinator attended an accredited FLLN professional development programme in 2004. Most staff have a teaching qualification and some tutors are qualified teachers. Some tutors have completed the core curriculum training. Learning resources for adults and children are well prepared with clear language and graphics. Crèche facilities are readily available to support family learning, except in schools which do not have suitable or available accommodation. Most accommodation is satisfactory or better, but dual-purpose rooms often have too much furniture. In one case, large pieces of after-school equipment was insufficiently guarded from children.

162. Language support is insufficient. Some new learners have few language skills and the provision relies too heavily on other parents to translate in sessions. In one class, two learners were making very slow progress and the tutor was unaware that additional language support could be available even in a keeping-up-with-the-children ESOL class. A bilingual nursery nurse was used in another class, but the learner could not actively be involved in the learning activity until the session was translated. Information, advice and guidance are satisfactory, but some learners are not clear about the aims of their learning programme when they enrol for the activity. The schools recruit learners through letters sent to parents or fliers in the school. Some sessions under-recruit or close after the first couple of sessions. The use of taster sessions has improved the assessment of parents' needs and has helped to guide learners to appropriate courses. Learners have access to specialist advice and guidance. For example, on the FLLN courses a specialist careers adviser is available to give advice to learners who have nearly completed the course.

Leadership and management

163. Target-setting and monitoring of the provision is good. Targets are set in the three-year strategic plan. The operational targets are in the development plans and the co-ordinators' performance monitoring plans. The achievement of these targets is

monitored each month by the curriculum managers and action plans are developed. All targets have been achieved or exceeded. The annual appraisal system is thorough and there is a six-monthly review where LSC targets and area targets are monitored. The review system effectively identifies the co-ordinators' development needs and that of the tutors. There is a strong focus on learner numbers to facilitate community capacity building, but there has been no target set for progression of learners to mainstream courses. However, lateral progression is good and there are some case studies showing progression into mainstream provision and work. Progression monitoring is not routinely completed and there is little analysis from the good course reviews and wider family learning course evaluations to make decisions on the effectiveness of courses in promoting lifelong learning. The management of family learning is effective. There are effective systems to monitor the quality of the provision. These include regular visits, lesson observations, analysis of feedback from learners, and meetings with tutors, school mentors and outreach workers. There is good celebration of learning which includes identification of champion schools. Team members and co-ordinators work well together and regularly share ideas.